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REPUBLIC

August 25, 1941

For a Declaration of War

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. 105, NO. 8 NEW YORK, MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 1941 NUMBER 1395

For a Declaration of War

THE NEW REPUBLIC BELIEVES that the United States should declare war on the Axis. We urge the President to ask Congress for this step. When he does so, we urge Congress to adopt immediately the necessary joint resolution. We urge the American people to indicate clearly to any of their representatives in Washington who might oppose such action that this is their will.

It is plain that in this midsummer the United States has reached the opportunity for a great decision, which may never come again. In the Far East we have been sharply challenged by the Oriental member of the Axis. In Russia the opposing forces are locked in a gigantic struggle, the outcome of which may cast the world in its future form. The Battle of the Atlantic still hangs in the balance. Hitler's familiar intrigue has reached the active stage in Latin America. Our armed power—industrial and military—has grown to a magnitude where it can count heavily. The extent to which we use this power, and the manner of its use, can in all probability decide the issue of the conflict.

If we hesitate longer, the Axis may succeed in its obvious endeavor to win the war before our cumbersome bulk is aroused to action. The Soviet forces, in spite of their heroic resistance, may be defeated. Japan may establish herself impregnably in eastern Asia and the South Seas. Both arms of the Axis would then be freed to consolidate their power against Britain and the United States. We should have to give up the prospect of defeating Hitlerism, and choose between a long defensive war and peace with the Axis—"peace" which would turn out to be a truce during which it prepared for a future assault on us. If, on the other hand, we use our full power now, we can stop Japan and detach her from the Axis altogether. We can at the same time strengthen Russia, both by freeing her from pressure in the east and by guarding Britain's rear so that she can take the offensive. We can reënergize the resistance to Hitler around the world. We can in the end produce Victory, instead of just wearing V's in our buttonholes.

To do this does not mean waiting to be attacked; it does not mean anything short of war. It means *War*.

Many, including this journal, have hitherto been opposed to a formal declaration of war, though at the same time urging the President to take whatever steps were necessary to make our aid effective, even if it meant shooting. Since the time that opinion was formed, however, many things have happened, both at home and abroad. The President has been slow in taking necessary action, and Congress has been even slower. Meanwhile the international situation has markedly changed, making it essential for us to take the initiative. Russia's resistance to Germany has been far greater than nearly anyone believed was possible when the war began two months ago. Heretofore we had assumed that the main strategic problem was one of preventing Hitler from an immediate successful assault on the British Isles, of holding him off until British defense, with our help, was satisfactory and our own armament was completed. For such purposes, a declaration of war was of minor importance and might even have been a disadvantage. But today there is a chance of an imme-

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diate and complete victory over Hitler through a combined assault by the United States, Great Britain and Russia. It is true that we are not entirely ready to participate in such a struggle; but we are quite sufficiently ready to play an important part during the time that we are completing our armament. Unquestionably we are far better prepared to fight now as one of a group of allies than we should be to fight alone one or two years hence.

The situation has also changed in the last few weeks as regards Japan. She is making threatening moves to the south and she is evidently considering an attack on the Russian rear, in Siberia. In both cases she is playing a tremendous game of bluff. Embroiled as she is with China, she might conceivably fight Russia, but it would be suicidal for her to attempt to fight Russia, Great Britain and the United States. She is obviously feeling us out to see how far she can go without bringing about actual hostilities. A declaration of war by the United States and Great Britain will instantly immobilize Japan. She will not dare to take one further step as long as there is any chance that Germany may be defeated in Europe. It is doubtful whether she can even maintain her present advanced positions. Going to war with Japan will mean little, if any, immediate fighting but it will freeze the situation in the Far East as nothing else could do.

Are the people of this nation ready to go to war? It is easy to know the attitude of the large majority, revealed repeatedly as it is through scientific polls and other tests of opinion. They are convinced that Hitler is a dangerous and implacable enemy, not only of the peoples of Europe but of this country and of all that makes life worth living to them. They are resolved that he must be defeated, and to that end favor all possible aid to Britain and her allies, even at the risk of war. They are hostile to the ruling powers in Japan, and want to give every help to the Chinese. They believe overwhelmingly that we shall have to fight if Britain is defeated; their estimate of Britain's chances rises and falls with the course of events. They demand an all-out defense program and are ready to make any necessary sacrifices for it. Behind all this is a sense of inevitability that sooner or later, in one way or another, we shall be "drawn in."

At the same time a substantial number of Americans —though according to some recent polls they no longer comprise a majority—are reluctant to enter the war now or by any deliberate act of our own. They would fight savagely in "defense," but would hesitate to send troops outside American possessions or the Western Hemisphere. They are waiting for leadership from the President, mindful of his campaign promise that he sought not war but peace. They are like a peace-loving but brawny citizen, annoyed on the street by a gang with whom he knows he will have to deal sooner or later, not angry enough at the moment to start hitting, and hoping that the police or somebody else will enable him to pass on about his business.

The general direction of American opinion is realistic. It is not overexcited or misled by "propaganda." The isolationists have been far more extreme in their appeals to emotion than the so-called "war mongers," who are accused, not so much of advocating war as of artfully concealing their intentions. Public opinion has correctly estimated Hitlerism and its danger, not on the basis of exhortation, but on the basis of events as they have been revealed in the news.

The judgment of the people about what ought to be done, however, has been biased—and justifiably biased —by their detestation of war. They have not wished to begin shooting unless it was proved absolutely necessary. But this praiseworthy desire has led to a good deal of wishful thinking, in which The New Republic has shared, about the possibility of defeating Hitler without our unlimited participation. At each phase of the war in turn we have hoped for a greater check to him than occurred. The fall of France was a terrific shock, but we kept speculating on the campaigns in Yugoslavia, Greece and Crete. By the time of the attack on Russia we had become so disillusioned as to underestimate her, but the reaction from that mistake can easily take us too far in the other direction.

The military power of the Axis is so great that we cannot be sure of its defeat without simultaneous and well coördinated action by all its enemies both active and potential. Most of us have long seen the futility of appeasement, which allows the aggressor to conquer his enemies one by one, as he gets ready. But we have been unrealistic in not admitting that even those who have ceased appeasing must act in complete concert and with all their force if the enemy is to be beaten. We cannot safely depend on others to do our fighting for us.

American opinion has been wrong, too, in hesitating to take the aggressive against a recognized opponent. No good general or admiral, who has been entrusted with the duty of defeating the enemy, lets his decision about the proper time and place for an attack wait upon a specific provocation. He does not delay until he is angry enough, but makes a cool strategical judgment concerning the best way to use the forces at his disposal. We as a nation shall be inexcusably weak if, having decided that Hitler must be defeated, we allow crucial opportunities to pass while we wait for him to knock a chip off our shoulder.

By the same token, American opinion has cherished a wholly unrealistic distinction between defense and attack. There is no doubt who is the aggressor in the basic sense. Our peace with Germany would still be cordial if the Nazis had not proclaimed themselves a master race and set out to conquer the world. But, since we are convinced that the Axis is *our* enemy as well as the enemy of the many peoples it has conquered and is

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at the moment trying to conquer, why is it justifiable defense to fight only when it crosses an imaginary line, and unjustifiable attack to fight before? And is it not foolishly sentimental to decree that our armed forces may fight in one geographical sector of a world war, but in no other? Wherever we may fight, we shall be defending ourselves against Hitlerism. It will cost fewer lives and less misery if we do so at the best strategical time and place, even if that happens to be on the exact opposite side of the globe from Washington, D. C.

The isolationists have argued that Hitler has no hostile intentions against the United States; that if we will just give him the rest of the world, he will let us alone. But supposing they were right, what sort of existence would this mean for the people of the United States? Not even Senator Wheeler or Lindbergh suggests that we should not arm ourselves to the utmost possible extent, and stay armed. What they propose would mean that for decades to come, perhaps a lifetime, the people of this country would have to spend from a third to a half or more of their national income in desperate preparation for a possible war. We must not forget that Hitler has shown over and over that he tears up treaties with no compunction, that he attacks without warning his nominal friends as well as his foes. What American is willing to contemplate an indefinite future for this country of crushing taxes, economic life sacrificed to the necessities of defense, millions of our young men kept always under arms? The prospect is intolerable.

As stated above, for a long time American opinion, the President and The New Republic have all been assuming that we could do all that was necessary, and indeed all within our power, without a technical state of war, a "shooting war." Our chief contribution was to be economic anyway: we would become the arsenal of democracy. We could even guarantee the safe arrival of our supplies in the fighting zones with a minimum of danger that Hitler would provoke us to violence, since he would hesitate to arouse us further. Hitler's opponents had adequate naval forces and plenty of men; all they needed was equipment which we could supply. There would be no opportunity for us to land an expeditionary force in Europe anyway.

This is a good argument. It is still possible that we could win with no actual fighting, or very little of it, if the enemy declined to fight back, or had no opportunity to do so. The distinction between war and non-belligerency is shadowy anyway, and in the limbo between them we could do about as we pleased, without worrying about whether it was called war or not.

We could—but we probably won't. So far our own action has been immensely hampered by the fact that we believe we are not "at war" and have made commitments to keep out of it. The President hesitates to take economic action which, if forcibly resisted, might compel the use of the army or navy. The isolationists oppose every necessary measure on the ground that it might "lead to war," and in many cases their opposition is partially effective. Congress, because we are not "at war," hesitates to do many essential things, such as imposing adequate excess-profits taxes or controlling inflation. It has even been on the point of demobilizing the army we have by refusing to extend the term of service, and the proposal passed the House by a single vote. Industry—both management and labor—has hesitated to go all out for defense as it would do if our forces were actually in the field. The leaders wait for the people to catch up, and the people wait for the leaders to go ahead. The national conscience is confused and inhibited because the national commitment is limited.

We opposed a declaration of war also because public opinion was not ready for it, and because it might lead to withholding necessary aid from Britain. This opinion was, we believe, correct at the time; but the situation has so changed as to make it incorrect. Now it is necessary to convince public opinion, and to see that we enter the war, not as an isolated agent but in complete strategical accord with the other anti-Axis belligerents. The President likewise should ask the people to release him from his campaign pledge, in the vital interest of the nation. The world situation has enormously changed since he made that pledge. No statesman should be asked to bind himself for the indefinite future, regardless of developments that the human mind cannot predict. We have no doubt whatever that the American people, if the facts are fully and clearly presented to them, will release the President from his promise.

What, anyhow, is the function of a statesman in a democratic state? To act in accordance with his own best wisdom, regardless of the people's will? To follow the people's mandate—to register it in action as automatically as one of the new voting machines? Or to go to the people with his case, if it happens not to have their wide support, and to try to persuade them to his chosen policy? The first course will turn democracy into dictatorship, with its head much overgrown; the second will leave it a headless body, the sprawling victim of any foreign enemy; the third will produce a maximum of mortality among democratic leaders, but a minimum of mortality among democratic states. We have no quarrel with that large principle; we want leaders who are willing to risk their political necks to save democracy, not those who will risk democracy to save their own necks.

Fundamentally, the position of The New Republic has not been inconsistent. It has never been absolutist in pacificism, or contended that the ultimate rule of national conduct was to avoid war, no matter what the cost. It has always believed that certain things are worth fighting for. It has bent its efforts rather to help-

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ing create a world in which war would be unnecessary. The result cannot be achieved by war, but it also cannot be achieved unless Hitlerism is defeated on the field of battle.

Last time, this nation entered a war to make the world safe for democracy and establish permanent peace; it was betrayed in the event because its aims were not embodied in the peace settlement. Do we now risk such a betrayal again? Must we wait for the announcement of satisfactory peace aims?

The declared and basic aim of the war is to defeat Hitlerism; in that negative aim we could ask for no more specific or positive assurance. The eight points recently agreed upon by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill point in the right direction, even though they are without sufficient specification. Still it might be argued that we should withhold our participation until a complete plan is achieved.

The answer to this argument is, first of all, that we cannot wait, as long as there is danger of a Hitler victory, which would obliterate peace aims altogether.

Even more important is the fact, becoming more and more apparent to students of the subject, that the kind of peace that will emerge after the war will not be a theoretical or ideological construction, imposed on the world when the fighting is over, but will result from the institutions created during its course. Hitler is now shaping his New Europe. If his enemies are to create a democratic internationalism, they must do so to win the war as well as to organize the peace. Social and economic changes have made great progress in Britain and the United States. It remains to form a worldwide Democratic Front—not merely an alliance intended to hold the enemies of Hitler together and prevent a separate peace, but exercising positive international coöperation in the economic and social fields to demonstrate how democracy can organize the world.

This, rather than an isolationist policy of defense, to be succeeded by an artificial and apocalyptical peace treaty, is our only real hope for the future. And in any such front, the economic and military power of the United States would make us the dominant partner, able to lay the foundations for any reasonable and workable peace which we may be able to hammer out of the world's tough realities.

Aside from all practical considerations, the gain from a frank acknowledgment that this country is at war and intends to use all its resources to win would be psychologically enormous. This would be true not only of the civilian population, much of whose doubt and confusion would disappear, but of the drafted men and National Guardsmen in the army. There has been plenty of reliable information of late that the morale of these men has been gravely deteriorating. Their response to the situation is summed up in a phrase many of them have used: "We want to fight or go home." A declaration of war would go far to clear up this dangerous situation.

In all the Allied and conquered nations, there would be a vibrant resurgence of the will to repel their oppressors. All the world—including the Germans— believes that if we should throw ourselves into the struggle and were committed to see it through, there would be no question about the outcome. And this belief is correct. The doubt and discouragement that have already begun to appear in Germany would be redoubled.

The gain to our sense of integrity would be even more important. We were right to hesitate at first. It is no sign of strength to take precipitate action, especially before one is prepared to accomplish one's end. And it took time to understand the true meaning of events, and to be ready both mentally and physically. But now we do understand. And now we are much nearer to being prepared, both materially and intellectually. The only thing remaining to do is to bring our purpose to a focus, and act accordingly. Hitler's contemptuous plans are based on the assumption that democracy cannot be discerning, resolute and swift enough to defeat a determined foe. We alone can prove that his estimate of our national character is wrong. Can we rise to the level of the greatest crisis our civilization has ever known? It is our privilege to make the history that will furnish the reply. The time is here, the occasion is at hand.

We can no longer pretend that this is not our war, while we depend on others to give their lives in order that it may not become our war. That is an intolerable position for a proud and self-reliant people. If it is not our war, we should have nothing to do with it. But we have decided otherwise. If it is our war enough so that we must pour our material wealth into the scales on one side only, then it is our war to fight as well. If we are content to try to buy our safety by the use of mercenaries, then we are degenerate indeed.

We cannot achieve this moral integrity by waiting to be precipitated into the fighting by a trick or an accident. Shall our decision of so great an issue depend on whether a Japanese bomb happens to fall on, or a few yards away from, an American boat in a Chinese river? Or whether a reckless U-boat commander happens to torpedo an American ship, instead of a British one? We do not need the hot flash of rage in order to do what is necessary; the issue is too great for that. Long ago Hitler has angered us, individually, as much as decent men and women can be angered. Nothing more he could do would more deeply stir our resentment. We have a job to do, in order to give the world a chance to avoid such obscenities in the future. It is a job that the American people should undertake deliberately, by a free act of will. As a part of that people, The New Republic calls upon the President to take the lead, and for Congress to act in our behalf, by declaring war on the Axis.

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Momentous Week

It may be a long time before the world sees another week so packed with important and dramatic events as the one ending on August 19. In that week, Marshal Pétain openly admitted to the world that so far as her present government can manage it, France has lost her honored place in the sisterhood of nations and has become a mere barbarous appendage to the barbarous Nazi state. In that week, also, the House of Representatives of the United States actually passed by only one vote the measure to keep the drafted men beyond their first year. That vote was a terrifying demonstration of the effectiveness of isolationist and Nazi propaganda in this country and the comparative failure of those who have been trying to rouse the nation to its peril. In that week, Japan seemed to move still closer to the threat of hostilities with Great Britain and the United States, although some informed observers believed that she would draw back from the final plunge. And most of all, in that week the heads of the two great democracies met at some spot off the North American coast to discuss the course of the war and the common dangers, responsibilities and opportunities by which their two countries are confronted.

Roosevelt and Churchill

So far as the world now knows, the chief result of the historic conference is the set of eight peace terms discussed below. But no one believes that the President and the Prime Minister undertook the great personal dangers of their conference merely in order to prepare a set of peace terms which, admirable as they are, could just as well have been done in twenty minutes on the transatlantic telephone. There seems no doubt at all that these two leaders discussed many other subjects, and agreed upon a joint course of conduct in the world crisis. Many guesses have been made about the contents of that course of conduct. What follows is a combination of several of them, and particularly that of the syndicated columnists Drew Pearson and Robert Allen.

1. As was publicly indicated, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill are confident that Russia can hold out at least through the coming winter. They propose therefore, in their own interest, to give her all possible aid. On the part of the British this may include an army coming up through Iran to help relieve the Russians in the Caucasus. On the part of the United States, it will consist for the present of military supplies rushed across the Pacific to Vladivostok.

2. If Japan should resist this action, Great Britain and the United States will go to war with her at once, on the assumption that she can be defeated in a year or less and that Russia will engage Hitler's energies long enough to permit Japan to be knocked out before he can come to her aid.

3. It is assumed that there is still a chance that Japan will avoid war. The democracies are giving her only two choices: to fight, or to abandon the Axis altogether. They consider there is a good chance she will do the latter.

4. Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill take it for granted that Pétain will not resist Hitler in anything; that the Germans will get the French fleet and full access to French Africa, including Dakar. It is possible that this might make the position of the British in the Mediterranean temporarily untenable. The leaders of the democracies do not believe that the shape of the war will be changed by the handing over of the French fleet, at least while Hitler is still wholly engaged on the Russian front. That interval will enable the United States to prepare defenses in South America.

We do not know how much of all this represents what really happened when the two chiefs of state conferred. We feel, however, that it represents on the whole a wise policy for the two democracies. We hope that if such agreements do not already exist, they will speedily be created.

Conference in Moscow

That the foregoing outline is close to reality seems to be corroborated by the news that Great Britain, the United States and Russia are about to confer in Moscow. Plainly, such plans as are described above depend upon the resources Russia has and whether she is prepared to stand firm, not only against Hitler but against Japan. It is certainly necessary for the three countries to lay all their cards on the table and to give one another such guarantees as will justify actions over a long period of time predicated upon a firm understanding.

The Eight Points

The peace aims announced by Messrs. Churchill and Roosevelt, though approved in Britain and the United States, aroused little enthusiasm in either country. Their general tenor had long been taken for granted; they came as an anti-climax to the publicity about the meeting. People expected something more startling and wanted to know what was really said.

These aims, however, may in the long run become more important than they now appear. Populations of the conquered countries certainly may be encouraged by the assurance of the two greatest democracies that they intend to disarm the aggressors and restore self-government. The Japanese militarists may find more difficulty in convincing the people that Britain and America are out for conquest and that Japan needs to fight for raw materials. The German people themselves can learn from it that they will not be enslaved if Hitler is beaten. And though the eight points are much criticized as a mere repetition of Wilson's fourteen, they contained one significant new note—the

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promise of higher standards of living throughout the world.

Whether the eight points will be effective in actuality depends on two things: first, what life is given them by vigorous action on the part of the United States to win the war; second, their elaboration into more concrete measures to achieve the aims expressed.

Fascist France

What is there to be said about the terrible spectacle the world saw last week of France in chains being sold into harlotry by the weary old Marshal who hides behind his age to escape some of the moral censure that he so fully deserves? His surrender seems somewhat less poignant because we had discounted it long ago; everyone has known that the men of Vichy were fascists who pretended to hold out a little against Hitler only because they knew there were still millions of French citizens who continued loyal to liberty, equality and fraternity and that even when these millions are disarmed, helpless and half-starved, it is not wise to goad them too far, too quickly. And again, the spectacle is less heartbreaking than it would be if we were not convinced that this nightmare will pass, the German heel will be removed from France's throat and that some day she will rise again.

The Appeasers Are Like the Brook

Vichy's surrender to Hitler should have silenced forever the appeasement group in the American State Department. They were wrong about Italy; they were wrong about Spain; they were wrong at the time of Munich; they were wrong about Japan and now they are proved wrong about Vichy. One might well ask: How many successive mistakes can a political expert make without being discredited? The answer is, that if this expert is in our State Department there seems to be no limit; one goes on, like the brook, forever. But we refuse to accept this gloomy view. We are confident that some day the President and Congress will realize the harm that has been done by men, many of whom have appeased the fascists because they are themselves so fascist minded, and will call for an accounting.

American Vichyites

It is high time for responsible and patriotic Republicans, other than Mr. Willkie, to do something about the sorry record their party is chalking up in the emergency. The most startling evidence of the way the party machinery is playing politics with the national safety may be found in the vote in the House on the bill to keep the army together for another eighteen months. On that vote, the Republicans divided 133 against, 21 for. The Democrats, on the other hand, were for the bill 182 to 65. The only Republicans who voted for the bill were seven from New England, nine from New York, one from Minnesota and four from California. They doubtless—with the possible exception of the gentleman from Minnesota—could hardly go back and face their constituents if they obeyed the party leadership. The rest were not, for the most part, sincere isolationists or pacifists; they were thinking of votes on election day in 1942, and were following the stupid lead of Messrs. Hoover, Landon, Taft, John L. Lewis et al. We hope the voters will prove once more that these discredited politicians do not know how to win elections.

Whose Representatives?

Faced with an insistent demand by the administration for prompt authorization of price control to prevent inflation, the House of Representatives decided to take a vacation. We hope it costs them so much that they'll swiftly come back with nerve enough to act.

Who Is Guilty at Kearny?

The papers and radio broadcasts are full of a new "epidemic" of defense strikes, though in fact there have been hardly more than a half dozen, none of which lasted more than a few days. The longest is that at Kearny, New Jersey, which we have been told over and over again is for the "closed shop." The President of the shipbuilding company concerned—a subsidiary of U. S. Steel—melodramatically offered to turn over the plant to the government rather than to deprive American workers of their freedom about forming unions. We are left with the impression that the men quit work in violation of a no-strike agreement.

All this is contrary to the facts. The basic shipyard agreement left unsettled all questions about the "open" or "closed" shop, which were to be decided by the National Mediation Board. The men involved demanded, not the closed shop, but the union shop, which allows the company freedom in hiring, but specifies that men who are hired must pay dues to support the union which protects their interests. Such a requirement is entirely justifiable. The Mediation Board upheld the union shop; the union accepted the decision; the company violated its pledge by refusing to do so. No strike would have occurred if the government had induced the company to accept its verdict. It did not do so because the company remained adamant, enforcement would have required taking over the plant, for that a Presidential order was required, and the President was talking with Winston Churchill. Whatever else happens, let's keep these facts straight.

Army Morale

How good is the morale of the American army? There is a disturbing amount of evidence that at least in some places it is now very bad indeed. Every magazine and newspaper gets some letters from drafted men or National Guardsmen complaining sharply of the conditions, and these complaints go far beyond the

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normal tendency of a soldier to "grouse." They go far beyond similar expression in 1917.

In Life for August 18 appears a report on conditions in a Southern army camp where 60 percent of the men are National Guardsmen and 40 percent are drafted. The reporter talked with 400 privates from five different regiments and this is what he found:

Half the men said (perhaps not too seriously) that they intend to desert; 90 percent regret being in the army; only two out of 400 would like to make it a career; 95 percent feel there is no emergency sufficiently serious to prevent their going home at once. There was sharp criticism of incompetence among officers, lack of recreation, lack of such elementary necessities as bathing facilities; failure to teach the men anything but the usual close-order drill and kitchen police.

This is a serious situation, which will get worse unless steps are taken to remedy it. It is plain that the soldiers have never been properly told why this country is in danger and to what extent. But it is not enough now to make speeches at them about the menace of Hitler. Their grievances are legitimate and ought to be set right. We commend to our readers the letter from a private on page 254 of this issue of The New Republic. The traditional drillmasters of the corps of officers in the army do not know how to make use of the alertness and intelligence of the enlisted men. This is bad for the men; it will be bad for the nation too, if the army has to fight.

Nazis in South America

When an American reads a story of an attempt by armed Nazis to seize power in South America, does he think, "This is war, directed at me?" When he hears that the fighting between Peru and Ecuador is being deliberately prolonged by Nazis in a position of control in the Peruvian Army, does he perceive that the Nazis' true antagonist if the report is true, is himself? When he reads a brief item, of which there are one or two in any issue of any newspaper he picks up, about Nazi propaganda in South America, does it occur to him that South Americans are Americans, that Hitler moves one step at a time and that a Nazi drive from South to North America is held as certain, in the Nazi mind, as the movement of the sun from east to west? In Peru, a Nazi theatre is paying the owner of another moving-picture house for keeping his theatre dark—that is to say, for not showing Hollywood movies. Only German-made films can be seen. In Argentina, Nazis circulate trucks bearing screens for movie propaganda in agricultural districts. Benjamin Welles, in The New York Times, reports that virtually every inhabitant of German descent in Panama is a member of the Nazi party. Espionage against the defenses of the Panama Canal is a twenty-four hour activity. United States authorities are aware of it but cannot stop it because we are at peace with Germany. In a series of articles in PM Virginia Prewett has recently told how almost every German in Mexico has been forced into Nazi propaganda work, which reaches from Mexican army officers to the most ignorant peasant. Employes of German firms give ten percent of their pay to the party. They are forbidden to spend money on luxuries. They live like people of nations at war. How long will it be before we realize that they consider themselves at war with the United States and are dangerous?

Last Week

Notes from returning travellers. . . . Vacationists in the resorts where the girls wear long dresses in the evening are having the happiest summer in years, raising funds for Britain. The high social tone of the charity will bring at least a governor to any garden party. Visitors who do not look upon the defense of the United States in its moment of greatest danger as a matter of philanthropy look for some awareness of the national danger at the parties, usually unsuccessfully. . . . There is a lot of cash in New England, on all levels, but people are annoyed at That Man for pushing the St. Lawrence Seaway. The fact that his three Republican predecessors also spoke for the national interest in recommending the Seaway is overlooked. . . . The 2,000,000 barrels of oil Texas operators were to give to England turned out a mere 11,228. . . . John R. Davis, the New York City Republican who is running for Mayor against Fiorello La Guardia thinks that "aid to Britain is just another relief program to extend and fortify the New Deal political machine." The American Legion says that aid to Russia is downright immoral. . . . Lieutenant General Ben Lear thinks that if the morale of the men in the United States army is poor, it is "only because the morale of the people is poor." Perhaps it is time for a certain simplification in American thinking. Can it be brought about in any way other than by an effort on the part of everyone to think only of the national interest? See page 235, this issue.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

Editors: BRUCE BLIVEN, MALCOLM COWLEY, GEORGE SOULE, STARK YOUNG; *Washington Editor:* MICHAEL STRAIGHT; *Treasurer:* DANIEL MEBANE; *Assistant Editors:* NIGEL DENNIS, BYRON DEXTER, OTIS FERGUSON, ELIZABETH HULING; *Contributing Editors:* H. N. BRAILSFORD, VAN WYCK BROOKS, JULIAN HUXLEY, MAX LERNER, E. C. LINDEMAN, R. G. TUGWELL; *Advertising Manager:* E. G. WOOD

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Defense and Consumption

The article below presents one view of the highly controversial subject of how much butter we can have while we are producing guns. We hope to publish articles giving other positions on this subject in the near future. – THE EDITORS

EVER SINCE the fateful days of 1933, loose talk about inflation has been part of the strategy in the fight against the New Deal. The prevalence of that talk now is partly due to genuine problems created by government plans to spend more than $40,000,000,000 for armaments; but a lot of it is the old inflation bogey invoked in an attack on the standard of living of the poorer sections of the American people. The attack centers in the notion that the production of huge quantities of armaments is draining our resources and productive capacity so heavily that curtailment of consumers' purchasing power is imperative.

Such curtailment, it is reasoned, will reduce the demand for consumers' goods and make available for defense needs raw materials and productive capacity otherwise required for the consumers'-goods industries. The various schemes suggested include broadening the income-tax base to include much smaller incomes, imposing heavy excise taxes on certain consumer commodities, or compelling people to save through some kind of a deferred-income plan. Most of the deferred-income schemes are variations of the Keynes plan to impose compulsory savings on all income earners except the very low groups in order to finance the war more easily and to reduce civilian consumption.

In our own situation, the problem of financing defense expenditure has played a much smaller role in the drive to curtail consumers' spending power than the alleged danger of inflation. Price movements, the threat of inflation, the necessities of defense, have all been fitted together to provide convincing arguments for an assault upon the living standards of the lower-income groups. There is danger that those who have most to gain from restricting output, or from shifting the burden of defense financing to the lower-income brackets, will persuade us to accept a general curtailment of consumption long before there is any genuine need for it. A careful examination of the problem is urgent. What is inflation? Is there any immediate danger of it? Where is it likely to develop? Is a general curtailment of consumer purchasing power an effective way of fighting it?

Not every price rise is inflationary. Some are the normal results of increased production. They are a means of encouraging less productive enterprises to produce. There is no danger of inflation until increasing prices no longer induce increases in production. Inflation results from competitive bidding for goods which the economy can no longer produce in sufficient quantity. When such price rises start to cumulate and spread through the *entire* economy, we have inflation. Every war situation is alive with an inflationary potential.

All major inflationary developments in modern history can be traced directly to conditions created by war. Preparation for war increases government spending for armaments. This expenditure, in turn, increases consumer purchasing power by increasing the number employed and the number of hours worked. The stream of purchasing power then runs, roughly speaking, through three faucets: (1) defense and non-defense government spending; (2) expenditures of private enterprises for replacement of old and erection of new productive capacity; (3) consumer spending. If demand registered by these income streams can no longer be satisfied either by existing supplies or by new production, inflation is imminent. In view of present large reserves in capacity and manpower, there is little danger of such a condition confronting our economy for some time to come. Even if we were actively at war (when the millions of men under arms receive and spend money but do not produce), it would take some time for the inflationary virus to become fully active. Of course the situation requires close attention. Leon Henderson, Chief of the Office of Price Administration, can be depended upon to suggest in due time appropriate measures to forestall inflationary developments.

What is happening today, and what many people find so frightening, is that part of one or another of these income streams is sometimes blocked by shortages in specific industries. The resultant price increases for specific commodities, the demand for which cannot be satisfied, are the so-called "bottle-neck inflations." Not in themselves inflationary unless they are permanent, they are still undesirable and are first felt in those industries which depend on the purchasing power flowing through the first two faucets—the raw-material, capital-goods and defense-producing industries. The resulting price movements should be controlled by priorities, price fixing, and a careful, scrupulous supervision of investment for new capacity. The government has tried to do this through its priority and price-control system.

The problems of supply created by the stream of purchasing power running through the third, or consumer, faucet are not much different from those in the

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defense and capital-goods industries. As long as the economy is not utilizing all of its resources and man power, it is possible to have both more guns and more butter. There is no need to curtail civilian demand for consumers' goods which do not compete with armament so long as their production can keep up with the increasing supply of money in the hands of consumers. Since a high degree of elasticity of the factors of production exists in the entire economy, particularly in many consumers'-goods lines, production can satisfy a large increase in demand without an inflationary price rise. Moreover, increased purchasing power will be spent in many different industries, thus spreading its effects over many parts of the economy and many individual commodities. This diversity in consumer patterns, by breaking the force of the total demand into smaller segments, considerably reduces inflationary tendencies. The threat of inflation, therefore, is not simply a question of the total amount of additional purchasing power, but of where the purchasing power will be spent and of whether it is possible to expand production in the particular pressure areas without hindering defense. In other words, to speak sensibly about the possibilities of inflation we must estimate how much purchasing power will increase, and where the money will be spent.

A rough estimate can be made for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1941. The major source of increased consumer purchasing power will be wages paid out to newly employed individuals. The Office of Production Management estimates that approximately 3,000,000 persons will be given employment during the year ending July 1, 1942. If we assume a rather high average weekly wage of $30 per man, the increase in wages paid out to additional workers will be about $4,500,000,000. Since these workers will have received, either from unemployment insurance or from public or private relief, some income before they were reëmployed, the potential increase in effective demand is less than $4,500,000,000. Assuming an average weekly relief income of $10 per man, the total increase in individual spending power will amount to approximately $3,000,000,000.

This amount will not be spent for a single commodity, but will be spread over many industries. An idea of how it will be spent can be had from the United States National Resources Committee study of consumer expenditures in various income groups in 1935-36. Using our previous assumption that average individual incomes of the newly employed will increase from approximately $500 to $1,500 yearly, about $975,000,000 more than previously will be spent for food, $525,000,000 more for housing, $325,000,000 for clothing, $325,000,000 for automobiles, $325,000,000 for household operations, $150,000,000 for medical care, $150,000,000 for furnishings, $60,000,000 for tobacco, $35,000,000 for reading matter, $25,000,000 for education, and various smaller amounts for a great number of other items.

Some of these amounts will be considerably larger, of course, because of the increase in income of present wage earners, entrepreneurs, farmers, etc. Even so there are few indications of shortages in supply in the near future. If they do occur, they will be restricted to a few lines of consumption. There cannot be many food shortages in the country. At most, we face a temporary scarcity of some few items. The most important items in the household-operation expenditures are fuel and electricity. There does seem to be some danger of shortages of coal, gas and fuel oil due primarily to transportation difficulties. But in such other major household items as telephone, water, laundry, express and freight charges, matches, wax paper, clothes pins, and a host of other items, production can be increased. In other categories—clothing, medical care, recreation, personal care, tobacco, reading and education—most of the increased consumer expenditure will make itself felt in lines that can easily meet the increased demand without hindering the defense effort. If this is true, there is no necessity for an overall curtailment of consumer purchasing power. An important exception is housing; but no overall reduction of consumer spending power will solve this problem. Until more housing can be provided, rents can be kept stable only through price-fixing.

We have deliberately postponed mentioning automobiles and house furnishings, which include refrigerators, electric toasters, washing machines, and other items. Consumer demand for these commodities may compete with defense needs should the two together exceed the available supply in raw materials, machinery or skilled labor. Since defense needs are primary, they must be satisfied first. The question remains as to whether a broadening of the income-tax base, or heavy excise taxes, or some deferred-income scheme, are the best ways of reducing demand for those few items. There is no doubt that all such techniques curtail the purchasing power of the lower-income groups for consumers' goods, but this is no guarantee of their efficacy. For it is not at all certain that the resulting decline in demand would be directed at precisely those commodities in which shortages had developed. If it were not directed there, consumers would be making unnecessary sacrifices by curtailing consumption of plentiful commodities. In other words, overall curtailment of consumer purchasing power would have failed to perform its alleged function of reducing demand for commodities competing with defense.

A further objection to broadening the income-tax base or deferring spending is the fact that the effectiveness of both methods is inversely proportionate to the level of income. In the lower-income groups, which ordinarily find it impossible to save, any curtailment of purchasing power necessarily reduces spending for some

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items. The higher the income group, the greater the possibility of maintaining its consumer habits by curtailing customary savings, gifts and charitable contributions. Unless a very large number of families be exempt, which would defeat the very purpose of the plan, any deferred-income scheme would affect most severely the very income groups which can least afford to reduce their expenditure for consumers' goods. According to the National Resources Committee study, families with an annual income up to $1,250 not only do not save at all, but incur annual net deficits because their earnings are below their expenses for daily necessities. Families with an annual income between $1,250 and $1,500 save only about 1 percent a year. It is in the needy groups earning less than $1,500 (which comprise about 68 percent of our population) that the Keynes plan would seriously reduce purchasing power. But no similar reduction is required in the higher-income groups, which usually save anyway. Unless the rate of compulsory savings for these groups is considerably higher than the usual rate of their voluntary savings, it must be assumed that much of what they are compelled to save under the Keynes scheme will simply be subtracted from what they would have saved anyhow. Families earning over $4,000 per year save at least 20 and as much as 50 percent of their incomes, according to the National Resources Committee. These people can continue their normal spending habits in spite of the compulsion to save. The Keynes plan may be an efficient revenue raiser. If high taxes are not politically feasible, it may be the least exceptionable general anti-inflationary device for an economy that is rapidly approaching the extreme limit of its productive capacity. But for the United States *today* it would be an inequitable and perhaps unsuccessful method of eliminating the threat of price increases that arises in the few areas where consumers'-goods industries compete with defense.

A better way to avoid undesirable price increases for consumers' goods is to adopt the same techniques already in use in the raw-material, capital-goods, and defense industries: priorities (rationing) and price fixing. This is the only way to avoid penalizing the lower-income groups by compelling them to make sacrifices in consumption which the higher-income groups can escape. And it has the added virtue that its effectiveness does not depend on the whims of any consumer group. It attacks shortages directly, precisely where they exist or may develop, instead of wishfully projecting a hope that purchasing power, if curtailed in a general way, will automatically stay away from price-pressure zones.

OTTO NATHAN

For a Quick Victory

II. *Where the Allies Can Strike*

THE EASTERN FRONT affords new and undreamed-of strategic opportunities to the Anglo-Saxon powers. After the British defeat in the Balkans, the most complex and difficult problem confronting British strategy was how to return to the Continent. This problem has now been solved. The war has been carried back into Europe. The broadest land-war front Hitler has ever faced has been created. The entry of the Soviet Union into the war has also solved the problem of a war of coalition for the Anglo-Saxon powers. In the Soviet Union they have obtained the strongest available ally against Hitler. The war resources of the Anglo-Russian coalition, aided by America, are infinitely superior to the resources of the Third Reich. Now the main question is how quickly, actively and completely American aid will be forthcoming. The Anglo-Soviet coalition has superiority over the Third Reich at sea, in the air and even on land. The superiority on land is for the present obscured by the strategic initiative of German aggression in the east; but in time it will take effect. Today's question concerns the efficiency and coördination with which this all-around superiority of the anti-Hitler coalition can make itself felt.

The focal task of the anti-Hitler alliance is that of the war of coalition—the policy of military coalition. The original reason for the failure of the Anglo-French coalition lay in the weakness and the errors of Allied strategy. France pursued a strategy of passive defense; Britain clung to economic warfare, paying attention chiefly to the defense of her islands and empire, whereas both should have been defended on the European Continent. But another reason for the collapse of the Anglo-French coalition was its failure to wage an effective war of coalition. Mutual aid among the Allies simply did not become effective. France gave inadequate protection to Britain on land, while Britain did not send sufficient aid to France on the Continent.

The Anglo-Soviet coalition is a military structure altogether different from the Anglo-French coalition of yesterday. And its opportunities in a war of coalition are different too. We already know that the combat power of the Red Army is several times that of the former French Army. Even during the first and most difficult phase of the war, Soviet resistance has greatly relieved Britain, in the islands as well as in empire defense (Suez). But aside from strengthening its defense, the present coalition affords Britain a perspective

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of offensive. The Red Army has an offensive potential. It has been trained in the offensive spirit and it possesses the material means for offensive warfare. Today Britain can for the first time examine the methods of offensive warfare for her own purposes.

The present hostilities cannot be regarded as parallel, segregated wars—a Soviet-German war and an Anglo-German war. There is but a single common Anglo-Russian war against the Third Reich. It is a war of coalition, affording special potentialities to the Allies and making special demands on them. Combined actions may result not merely in the addition but in the multiplication of strategic effect. On the other hand, military actions that may appear difficult and attended by prohibitive losses from the viewpoint of individual strategy, may become useful and necessary from the viewpoint of a common strategy. Efficient coöperation of effort and strategic planning may hasten the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition.

A British landing at Petsamo is within the realm of possibility and a German counterblow on land would be extremely difficult. There are no railways whatever in northern Finland. The nearest railway terminates at Rovaniemi, 250 miles from Petsamo, but the Russian railway terminal and military base of Murmansk is but sixty miles away. German air bases are further from Petsamo than are the Russian ones. Anglo-Russian collaboration in the far north may outflank the German lines in the north and exert strong pressure on northern Norway and northern Finland. Of course such action would be of merely local importance.

Greater significance attaches to possible Anglo-Russian collaboration in the Near East. Contact between British and Soviet land forces could be established by way of the land bridge of Iran. The combination of Russian resources in the Near and Middle East with British resources in the Near East and Africa, the formation of a common strategic reserve—these objectives are capable of realization. Such Anglo-Soviet strategic coördination could extend from central Asia and India to Gibraltar, from Egypt to the Caspian Sea. It would result in an extraordinary strengthening of Britain's position in the eastern Mediterranean, laying the basis for further strategic action in North Africa, the Mediterranean and southern Europe.

It is necessary to clarify the connections between the several fronts. The Mediterranean can become either a naval bridge between Germany and North Africa or one between Britain and southern Europe. Once the Italian fleet is blasted, the German bridge will have been blown up. All Germany now has in North Africa is a bridgehead—Libya. And its present preoccupation with the war in the east deprives it of any possibility of sparing air and land reserves for the Mediterranean and North Africa. As late as last spring, after the victory in the Balkans, Hitler had a chance of becoming "Kaiser of the Mediterranean," of dominating virtually the entire Mediterranean coast and creating a Euro-African empire, possibly including part of the Near East. By turning on Russia he has lost this chance, and today it is within the power of the Anglo-Saxon nations to end any such perspective for good and all. Shall Vichy be permitted to make Hitler a royal present of French North Africa and the French fleet at a time when Hitler is no longer able to take them by force? Such a present is undoubtedly the meaning behind the deal between Hitler and Vichy, behind Pétain's new program—to compensate the weakened position of the Third Reich in the Mediterranean by a diplomatic agreement. Only force can now prevent the "peaceful" surrender of the Mediterranean and North Africa to Hitler. British resistance alone, unaided by the United States, will probably not be sufficient.

What is at stake is this: North Africa and the Mediterranean are the logical bases for the Anglo-Saxon powers from which southern and western Europe can be wrested from Nazi occupation and rule. The shortest and swiftest way to victory is the creation of the second front—the Western Front in Europe. Even now it is difficult for the Third Reich to watch over the Atlantic coasts of its dominion on the European continent from Narvik to the Bay of Biscay. Here there are military possibilities for lightning raids, executed by naval forces, air forces and mobile troops. Such lightning raids may give rise to operations of greater scope, possibly leading to the creation of a permanent second front in the west. Disorganization of Hitler's rear on the western and southern European continent might be devastating to Hitler's entire strategy in Europe. In the west and south the Third Reich must be exposed to an unbroken series of pinpricks, blows, diversions and attacks that will give it no rest.

The problem of the war of coalition is not merely relief for the Soviet Union. The decisive factor is the liberation of the Red Army's offensive power which must be realized in the interest of all Hitler's enemies. This offensive power exists and it can be freed. Such an offensive by the Red Army in the east, however, would be greatly strengthened by a second front in the west. One need only visualize the importance to such a Western Front of a break-through by the Red Army into the Balkans. And a Soviet offensive on land would also greatly improve the chances for offensive war in the air. Soviet planes are now bombarding Berlin from their Moscow bases. Attacks from bases in Warsaw and Brest-Litovsk would have far stronger effect.

An active war waged by the Soviet Union alone must necessarily become a protracted war, just as an active war waged by the Anglo-Saxon powers alone would have meant a protracted war. But military coöperation between the Anglo-Saxon powers and the Soviet Union is bound to give the anti-Hitler coalition the certainty of victory and the possibility of swift victory.

Such a perspective gives new outlooks to American

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action, which today can achieve far more than merely saving Britain. Even the rescue of Britain was aimed at by the United States from the perspective of a Hitler defeat. Today a defeat of the Third Reich for the first time takes on a realistic aspect. Efficient coördination of military effort with the participation of the United States today holds the prospect of quick victory.

In the Far East too this problem of the war of coalition may be opened up in the near future. Japan hopes to localize the war. It counts on its naval superiority over the Soviet Union, its superiority on land over the Anglo-Saxon powers. But it cannot defeat the Soviet Union with its navy, nor can it strike Britain and America with its army. After all the experiences in Europe, are there still to be private, localized campaigns in the Far East? Shall Japan be allowed to have its way and conduct a separate war, either against the Anglo-Saxon powers alone, or against the Soviet Union alone? For a short time there may still be a last possibility of forcing Japan to retreat in the Far East—not by a preventive war, but by a coalition that would prevent war. There could be a powerful and effective combination of forces, with all-around superiority over Japan—at sea, in the air, on land, in strategic positions. For naval warfare against Japan there would be available the bulk of the United States Navy, the British Far Eastern Squadron and the strong Soviet submarine flotilla in the Pacific; for land war there would be the Red Army in the Far East and the Chinese armies; for air war there would be the Soviet air arm which threatens the cities and industrial centers of Japan, and the United States naval air arm which could administer terrible blows to the Japanese Navy. The fortified Soviet theater of war in eastern Siberia, the vast spaces of China and the naval bases from Kamchatka to Singapore offer formidable positions against Japanese aggression. There are finally the auxiliary resources of Australia and the Dutch East Indies. The crucial task of all the powers that seek to halt Japanese aggression is to attain a maximum of strategic coördination and planned disposition of all available forces. On their side they have technical and tactical arms superiority and inexhaustible economic resources against a Japan that is already exhausted economically, and exposed to a blockade. In the Far East too a swift victory is possible. The real interests of the Anglo-Saxon powers and the Soviet Union furnish a compelling motive for common action in the Far East.

MAX WERNER

Priority Unemployment

A NEW THREAT HAS ARISEN in America. While the government is straining to maintain one army in existence, another army three times its size is gaining new recruits every day. It is the army of the unemployed, and for every man it is sending to the front line of the factories it is receiving a new man from the front line—the defense unemployed. There are the unemployed from the restricted import industries; the 175,000 of the silk industry; the 15,000 of the cork industry; the 42,000 rubber workers who will have lost their jobs by the end of this year. There are the OPM unemployed, thrown out of the non-defense industries because OPM's failure to expand the production of raw materials has placed all strategic raw materials on the priorities list. There are the 150,000 automobile workers who may lose their jobs through the cut in automobile production. There are the 15,000 workers in the aluminum-fabricating plants, the hundreds of thousands in the factories producing refrigerators, furniture, washing machines, hairpins, etc. The AFL has estimated that 1,000,000 workers in the fabricated-metals industries will be affected by priorities unemployment by October 1. Leon Henderson's estimate was 2,500,000 by December. Yet this is only the beginning; in one raw material alone, copper, we face a shortage in 1942 greater than our 1938 production. There may be no copper for civilian supply, yet copper is vital in automobile production, in the electrical industry and most of all in housing. Within a year the building industry with its 1,600,000 organized workers may be the hardest hit of all non-defense industries.

The growth of widespread priority unemployment would seriously endanger the support of the defense program among the American people. It was to meet this threat that OPM has just reorganized its defense-contract service. The credit for this move, which is one of the most promising that has been made since the inception of the defense program, goes mainly to the Priorities Branch of the Labor Division of OPM. In the few weeks of its existence, this branch has made a brilliant record.

The reorganization of the Defense Contract Service is in two parts—the introduction of the negotiated contracts on defense orders and the regeneration of the almost defunct system of sub-contracting.

The insistence of the Army and Navy Munitions Board upon competitive bidding for defense orders followed naturally from the experience of the World War in which negotiated contracts concluded on a cost-plus basis resulted in collusion, graft, and war profiteering. On the other hand, the competitive bid is

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ruinous from the standpoint of a nationally planned defense effort. Through its concentration upon one criterion, that the lowest bid offered must be accepted, it ignores all consideration of the employment situation in different areas and the unused capacity which exists in industry. It creates great wastage in labor turnover and migration and when it is combined, as it has been, with an almost inoperative system of sub-contracting, it results in a great deal of defense unemployment through its concentration upon the few great corporations which are able to make low bids. It delays defense production because the great corporations which are able to obtain the competitive bid are usually overburdened with existing defense orders.

In the last year, the use of the competitive bid has meant that 75 percent of all defense awards have been placed with 56 corporations in eight industrial areas and that 3,200 counties have been left untouched by defense orders. Of the billions of dollars awarded in defense contracts, no more than $26,000,000 have been placed in sub-contracts by OPM's Defense Contract Service.

Early in July, Sidney Hillman obtained assurance that the Labor Division of OPM would be consulted on all priorities decisions affecting unemployment. The Priorities Branch which was organized on July 28 recognized that its task was impossible under the competitive-bidding system. With the aid of strong AFL pressure it succeeded in obtaining the assent of the Army and Navy Munitions Board to the principle of the negotiated contract. Under the new organization, if the United States Employment Service, which has become in effect the Field Service of the Labor Division of OPM, reports that labor is threatened with displacement in a certain factory as the result of a priorities order, the factory is certified as eligible for a negotiated contract. The system of competitive bidding which remains in force in all defense industries serves as a general guide on costs and the negotiated contract may be concluded only if it is within a 15-percent margin of the competitive bid. In addition, sub-contracting will be made effective for the first time through an area organization within which all small plants will be brought together in sub-contracting pools.

These two reforms meet the first of the demands of the AFL that defense unemployment be checked by the full utilization of plants. The second demand of the AFL remains: that workers who are displaced by priorities be trained by the government for other jobs. Already the Labor Division has attacked this problem. At Buffalo the local vocational-training system has been overhauled to meet the needs of the 3,600 displaced employees of the Chevrolet plant. These men will be reallocated and retrained under the joint supervision of the Employment Service, the representatives of the union, and the personnel managers of the local defense factories.

The Labor Division sees the Buffalo scheme as a pilot plan for the entire country. In its present form, however, it is gravely inadequate. Even in the richest states, $15 a week is the maximum wage that can be paid under vocational-training schemes; WPA cannot take care of these workers since its maximum wage is also $15; NYA suffers from the same limitation. Yet in many cases, such as at Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where the AFL wishes to make shipyard workers of the displaced employees of an aluminum-fabricating plant, the retraining may take a year. If wages commensurate with their present skill are paid to the displaced defense workers—and this is the standard which the AFL is demanding—a new agency empowered to pay fair wages will have to be created to retrain the defense unemployed.

The establishment of a Priorities Section of the Labor Division was undertaken as part of a larger scheme of organizing labor advisory councils of equal power with the industry advisory councils of OPM. It was unfortunate that this plan was struck an almost fatal blow at the moment of its creation. It gave to labor considerably less than the CIO was demanding in the Murray plan and it seems probable that Lewis, whose relation to Murray is still that of Jonathan to David, was successful in persuading Murray to denounce the proposal. In his speech before the Legislative Assembly in July, Murray advised all CIC unions to boycott the labor committees. This action was tragically short-sighted. Carried out in full, the Murray plan would prove to be something of a syndicalist scheme, which might actually damage the CIO. The advisory councils seem to offer a sound transition to full labor representation in the defense administration.

The United Rubber Workers alone in the CIO unions have thus far formed an advisory committee. Already it has won substantial gains for the rubber workers in preventing the local manufacturers from concentrating their restricted production in low-wage areas and in securing seniority status for the displaced workers. More recently the Textile Workers Union has formed an informal committee to administer the retraining of the silk workers in the production of rayon. It seems certain that the automobile workers will have to take the same step. Meanwhile the noncoöperation of unions such as the United Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers has made the work of those in OPM who are standing out for labor's interests against the copper monopolies extremely difficult. The Kennecott Copper Company, for example, has accepted with alacrity the chance to place its representatives within OPM.

The AFL has shown an admirable grasp of the problems of defense unemployment. It is urgently important that the entire labor movement overcome its traditionally syndicalist bias, and act with understanding of the problem of government in this emergency.

Washington MICHAEL STRAIGHT

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Ethics for Editors

THE DIONNE QUINTUPLETS endorse only one breakfast food and one kind of soap, and it would be a scandal if they also sold their O. K. to a rival product, but an advertising copy writer may quite ethically promote Sanka one day, coffee the next and proceed to extoll simultaneously all the competitive brands of cigarettes.

Where does the newspaper editorial writer come in with his pontificating pro and con and his various panaceas for public ills?

We have distinguished authority suggesting that he needn't be a one-soap baby at all but may with a good conscience promote both Chesterfields and Old Golds while actually smoking Bull Durham.

Reuben Maury of The New York Daily News, winner of this year's Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing, has just stated the case as he sees it with boldness and dash. The American Society of Newspaper Editors might perhaps like to take notice of his credo as a possible supplement to its celebrated Canons of Journalism.

Mr. Maury's views were obtained by New York's afternoon tabloid, PM, on June 26 and 27, being introduced first under the headline:

> News' Maury, Collier's Maury
> Don't See Eye to Eye on Things

Mr. Maury, it should be added, also writes editorials for Collier's Weekly. The Daily News is isolationist, anti-war; Collier's is the reverse. And PM reproduced both a sample passage from Mr. Maury in Collier's, pleading for convoys, and a sharp contradictory assertion from a Daily News editorial—side by side but certainly not eye to eye.

The next day Mr. Maury had a letter in PM making clear his position in thus editorializing for the contrary-minded News and Collier's, both at the same time. He said:

> I do not pretend to be anything but a newspaper hired man in business hours and a free-lance writer of editorials, articles and fiction the rest of the time. Especially have I never pretended to have any voice in formulating the editorial policies of either Collier's Weekly or The News.
>
> I am not running a personal, signed column, setting forth my own opinions, in any publication; though of course (adv.) I'm always openminded about offers.
>
> My job as an editorial writer, both hired and free-lance, is, as I see it, to do the best work I can for anybody who is so kind as to want me to write for him or her, regardless of what my personal opinions on any assigned subject may be.
>
> Anybody who can raise any valid objections to this attitude is welcome to do so. Anybody who publicly draws any false and injurious inferences from same is welcome to defend a suit for slander and/or libel.

The situation is a startling case of nature imitating art, the model being the bright little novel, "A Hind Let Loose," by the late C. E. Montague of The Manchester Guardian. Montague here poked elaborate fun at publishers and editorial writers, his hero being one Fay, Irish leader-writer for both of the two rival Liberal and Conservative papers in a provincial town, his impish talent managing to keep politics constantly stirred up to a blaze.

Montague's publishers were not thin-skinned, one of them angrily bewailing "that overdone craze about 'principle'," while the other thought principle was "a perfectly justifiable thing in its place; if in other respects a man is a gentleman, principle won't lead him very far wrong." And Fay himself accepted his two jobs, even took on a third, as casually as Mr. Maury. Fay's publishers couldn't write for themselves when they tried and proved him indispensable.

But the exposure set an idealistic youngster to wondering "whether the whole press goes down all the way to some central waters of falsity under the earth." And a bystander decided that "there ain't no bony fidy anywhere."

Mr. Maury, if he had chosen to enlarge upon his explanation, might have gone far beyond Montague's ironies for precedent. Examples are not hard to find in working journalism, where men seem to hold with the hare and run with the hounds. During the early days of the Tom Mooney case the Hearst papers offered a diverting contradiction. In California they were violently against Mooney, trying to execute him; in the East they were equally busy making a martyr of him. There is a Washington columnist of my acquaintance who has written reams of most reliable and disinterested political comment. He is ruggedly independent, I believe, for eleven months of the year. Nevertheless, he remains faithfully on call for his employer whenever the shooting gets hot, and just before election day or in the midst of a between-times crusade, he can be observed very discreetly to take a vacation from previous opinions, get in a few needed blows for the boss and then resume his liberal point of view before most readers notice that he blinked.

But the parallel is not universal. There are others. In the little towns and in the cities, today, yesterday and all the way back to John Peter Zenger in his jail, the record is bright with men who have insisted on saying "To Hell with you." And it ought to be remarked and remembered that when newspaper men talk shop, these independents are the ones they point to with pride.

Dissenting examples can be assembled, even from the position of The Daily News—the largest daily cir-

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culation in America—and from an editorial writer honored by a famous prize. Young men just beginning newspaper work could suppose all too easily that "there ain't no bony fidy." But it is a fact that many editorial writers are extremely jealous and touchy about saying nothing but their true opinions. They have quarreled about it, fought for it, defied publishers for the sake of it. Owners naturally employ editorial writers whose opinions are congenial. But when the vital difference arises, there is many a writer who sticks by his guns. The tradition is deep-rooted and arrogantly defended.

Some of the best publishers respect the tradition as highly as the editorial writers, and as sensibly recoil from forced labor. I know an extremely intelligent writer, who works on one of the ablest—and most politically hidebound—editorial pages in the United States who differs utterly with the page's partisan politics. By explicit understanding he is never asked to write on political subjects. And his contribution, on other subjects about which he and the paper agree, is a brilliant one.

Julian L. Harris, executive editor of The Chattanooga Times, is one who believes in this tradition. As editor of The Enquirer-Sun of Columbus, Georgia, Mr. Harris crusaded against the Ku Klux Klan until he lost a fifth of his circulation and nearly half of his advertising, and still kept on. Thereby, he won the Pulitzer Prize for public service in 1926. Last September The Chattanooga Times announced it would support Mr. Willkie for President, and on the same day it announced that Mr. Harris was not going along on that policy, nor was his assistant, Hunt Clement Jr. The two of them took a leave of absence from the editorial page until after the election. As Mr. Harris explained, this "simply carries out the policy of Mr. Adolph Ochs whose rule was that no man was asked to express an editorial opinion which was not the writer's."

The first ranker among all recent rebels against dictation and censorship, of course, was Heywood Broun. As a personal columnist writing under his own signature, Broun was not an editorial writer. But anonymity never could have kept Broun under wraps.

Getting off The New York World was his great opening blast. Two of his eloquent columns on Sacco and Vanzetti had appeared, and then, as the publisher expressed it, The World instructed him to select other subjects for his next articles. Broun rebelled. "I see no wisdom," he wrote, "in saving up indignation for a rainy day." He was on fire for Sacco and Vanzetti and wouldn't be stopped, even when his spilling of indignation cost him his job. From there on he never compromised, even when the exercise of his guaranteed independence under Roy Howard made it sure that his contract would not be renewed.

One man who preserved his independence even under Hearst was Fremont Older in San Francisco. For thirty years in fierce defiance of a timid ownership, Older had been master of The Bulletin. In his hands The Bulletin was the greatest power in the city for decency and humanity. And then an heir appeared and, under his prodding, the owner began asserting his ownership. Older caught them slipping editorials into the paper without his consent. In a rage he walked out to accept a long standing offer from Hearst, strictly on his own terms. What were the terms? That Hearst's Call should reverse its opposition to Tom Mooney and take up Older's crusade for Mooney's vindication, and that Older should have a free hand as editor, no restrictions. So Older went to Hearst.

The Communist Daily Worker was balked two years ago by the independence of its moving-picture reviewer, Howard Rushmore. The film "Gone with the Wind" was opening, and orders were handed down to "blister" it. But the reviewer saw a good deal in the picture that he liked and no justification for the attack that he was ordered to write. So he didn't write it. He let the Worker fire him instead.

Mr. Maury makes the point in his letter that he is not running a personal signed column. That is given as a reason against having personal opinions. One can cite anonymous independence just as fully, however, and the anonymous examples are authentic. I know an editorial writer in California whose paper swung over to the Associated Farmers, and he gagged at writing the desired editorials. He quit his job. I know an editorial writer in the East whose employer reversed the paper's policy to a point where he wouldn't follow, and more than three years ago he walked out. I know a large news bureau in Washington whose roster has been more than half changed in the last four years because of men walking out in disgust at policy to look for other jobs. His name at the masthead as editor of the Scripps-Howard Washington News indicated that Lowell Mellett had a good job. It was, in fact, an extremely good job. He resigned from it, rather than shift with the paper to anti-New Deal policy.

A little digging into the old clippings, a little more asking questions of other newspapermen, and anyone could double or triple this roll call of men who have refused to write everything their bosses told them. They made more than a pretense of being something more than hired men, and they were none too grateful to those kind enough to want their services. They had personal opinions that they believed in and leaped into battle delightedly to defend. They were not just selling a brand of soup.

If newspapers today have any claim to superiority over the glibness of newsreel and radio comment, it is that hundreds of the men who write them feel a certain conviction in what they say. The charge that they are merely glib should not be allowed to go by default.

GEORGE BRITT

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Washington Notes

Small Splash on the Potomac

WASHINGTON REACTION to the Churchill-Roosevelt meeting was curiously lethargic. Political leaders on both sides seemed to agree that the performance, in so far as it was intended to be an inspirational demonstration of democratic solidarity, was what Broadway would call a turkey. After the simultaneous disappearance of the President and the Prime Minister, the build-up of secrecy and suspense and finally the confirmation of guesses that the two leaders had indeed met at sea, announcement of the eight-point peace program was nothing if not anti-climactic. As the product of collaboration between the greatest contemporary masters of political rhetoric, the statement seemed an uninspired plagiarism of Wilson's fourteen points. The distinctions which a close examination revealed were not striking enough for effectiveness. Public comments from Mr. Roosevelt's partisans were stilted. Even the isolationist viewers-with-alarm couldn't pump much excitement into their denunciations. If there was nothing in this statement of minimum peace objectives to evoke enthusiastic approval, neither was there much to provoke attack.

Among the columnists, Arthur Krock of the New York Times was the only one who immediately found something in the historic event to get a good firm hold on. He found in it belated but satisfactory confirmation of his story, printed April 28, 1939, that the President had tried to arrange a conference at sea with Hitler and Mussolini. Roosevelt said of the story at the time: "It is interesting and well written but it is not true." This comment, Mr. Krock now points out, "was accepted in some quarters as a diplomatic denial." The conference, when it came off, was held in 1941 instead of 1939 and between Roosevelt and Churchill rather than between Roosevelt and the several dictators. Otherwise, as anyone could see, it was the same conference Krock wrote about two years ago. It was a peace conference and it was on a boat and it vindicated Krock.

Nevertheless, the probability is that it was not primarily intended to vindicate Krock, to put on a morale-building publicity stunt or even to gratify a Presidential whim to meet another leader of world importance on a ship at sea. There is a possibility, most commentators notwithstanding, that the President and the Prime Minister kept rendezvous on the high seas simply to take stock of the grave world situation, lay plans for closer coördination of the Anglo-American efforts to check the Axis and, incidentally, to draw the broad outlines of a mutually satisfactory peace. How well these purposes were accomplished will be the end of the story and will be told in action, not words. It is worth noting that the statement of peace aims, innocuous as it seemed, constituted a more definite commitment on the part of Churchill to accept the kind of peace American public opinion would support than anything President Wilson was able to get from the British in advance of the Versailles Conference.

That it required a high order of political courage for Churchill to go as far as he did was evident from the London comments—particularly the man-in-the-street interviews passed by British censors. "How come America has peace aims?" asked one of those interviewed. "She ain't in the war yet." Another said: "One day the Americans decide by one vote to keep an army; the next day they decide the future of the world." Londoners who have been dodging Nazi bombs cannot be expected to be too enthusiastic about a fair deal for Germany at the close of the war—at least not right now.

The House vote on the draft extension unquestionably was one of the principal reasons for the indifference with which Washington received the eight points. The one-vote margin of victory for this indispensable legislation brought home, more than any other squeak victory the administration has won or any defeat it has suffered in the last year, how ill prepared are the public and the legislators who more or less accurately reflect its mood for the inexorable march toward war. The question before the House was whether, with the President at sea laying plans for the defense of democracy, with war imminent in the Far East, the nation was to disband its army. There was nothing complicated about the way the issue was presented. Half the membership of the House, minus one, either dissented honestly from the administration's defense policy or feared the consequences of an affirmative vote in the elections coming in 1942.

The vote tended to confirm suspicions that the nation has been thinking of defense in terms of economic prosperity. So long as the effort meant only more jobs, better pay and bigger profits, indignation against the Nazis ran high. When it started to become apparent that defense also would mean sacrifice of silk stockings, of gasoline in unlimited quantities, taxes that hurt and temporary maladjustments creating unemployment, indignation cooled. Whatever accounted for it, the close division in the House climaxed a series of cold-water baths for the administration. The extent of the OPM's failure was just becoming known—the shortage in the strategic materials, the inadequacies of plant capacity, the disappointing rate of airplane and armament production.

There were a series of shocks from other quarters too. The Red Army started its retreat from the Ukraine. The Senate Finance Committee seemed unwilling to write a deep-digging tax bill. With prices rapidly getting out of hand, Republican members of the House Banking Committee filibustered through a week of hearings and then the committee recessed for a month. Army morale was unmistakably low. In its propaganda effort, no less than in its production effort, the administration was showing little in the way of results.

It was into the heavy gloom created by all this news that the eight points were dropped. That is why they made so little splash on the Potomac.

Justice Samuel Rosenman, the President's speech-writer and adviser, is running back and forth between OPM and OPACS trying to formulate a defense-reorganization plan that will get Leon Henderson and William Knudsen out of each other's hair. . . . Back from the Roosevelt-Churchill conference, Averill Harriman reassured dollar-a-year colleagues in the OPM at a private conference that they

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needn't worry about social reform in England. . . . Mayor La Guardia has taken Russell Davenport, former Willkie campaign publicist, Robert Kintner, former Washington columnist, and George Lyon, former managing editor of PM, into his civilian-defense publicity staff. . . . Senator James M. Mead of New York has talked about turning down a job as "tsar of organized labor" proffered by peace-bent representatives of the AFL and CIO.

T. R. B.

Comedies Yet

PICTURES of the type of "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" are difficult to make successfully, and this is largely because the screen's illusion of realism is strong enough to be a danger in any mixture with the supernatural. There are always attempts at it, and when the thing comes off it is fresh enough, and enough of a relief, to seem worth more among all pictures than it really is. "Mr. Jordan" has a fairly strong pattern of action as between unearthly forces and the doings of casual people, but it carries its strangeness off in the mood of sustained comedy. Under the inevitable strain of here-and-beyond it is always a little too artificial for your full acceptance, it is true. Still on the whole it is different without losing charm, it has suspense and violence without subordinating any of its essential lightness, and it is funny.

A title-contender in the ring is killed and we learn that this is an error on the part of one of the errand boys of a Mr. Jordan, who is a high man in the business of getting souls clear of carcasses and into heaven. The fighter's number will not be up for another fifty years according to the book, and Mr. J. himself has to take charge of the business of getting him back into a suitable body, so as to balance the books up above. The difficulty of doing this with the fighter's coöperation makes up the rest of the story, for there are various technical requirements and he is a square enough chap but not very bright or easily led either, and he still seems to have muscles running all over him from the kind of profession he was in.

The broadest humor in the picture comes from the broadest situations, where the audience knows what some of the more thunderstruck characters do not and where much is made of this with business. The sharper edge comes from certain of the performances and from much of the dialogue, or the little writing inventions along the way. But even after such an ingenious fantasy had been imagined and worked out in detail, there was still the necessity of keeping a sluggish audience aware of where it was sitting each minute, and awake. And since any such forbidding dual requirement stipulates an extra weight of exposition and an exaggeration of the visual, saying a thing twice, etc., the humor never had a chance to be wholly brilliant or steady.

Robert Montgomery had the big part and made this his picture with ease. He developed no special style that could be new to us. He simply used a nice quality of intelligence in placing himself at a double remove, keeping the character in a steady logical position of sameness without boredom. James Gleason was the comedy foil. With all that rasp and go, he is always a pleasure to have around (those are *his* nerves, not ours). Claude Rains has a fine stage presence and an impeccable delivery, and there is just enough of both and nothing else here to make you wish long before the end that as Mr. Jordan he would stop being a diabolical saint and pick his teeth for a minute. The rest of the cast is a cast, and not always under sufficient direction.

In "Here Comes Mr. Jordan" there are whole sequences of just talk—semi-inspirational at times but turning out in the end to have had little more purpose than that of getting the story out of one hole and ready for another. And then there is the matter of a certain occasional reaching for effect in direction, the elaborate misunderstanding, the prolonged sneer, the Enormous Take. These things get their noisy response in the theatre, and therefore I suppose are their own excuse for having been put there; though I have heard just as many people laugh just as hard over comedy which was not slung at you like a wet towel in a dormitory. But in a picture like this there are enough things of shrewdness and delicacy to indicate that such crudities represent either a deliberate lowering or lack of taste—for which the best in pictures can have no use. It could have been better because it is better as something original and in a movie way. Oh forget about it. In general it is a thing where you have a good time.

"My Life with Caroline" had a likely enough idea to start with: the foolish wife always going off with some glib chap who had sold her a new version of the real Caroline, the husband always sauntering in to break it up and set her right (because after all he loved and appreciated her though he wasn't around much, probably having reasons for both). It has the story twist whereby the husband arrives in the middle of a crisis, winks at the audience and says: "All over again, that's my life with Caroline. Now last time—" the body of the picture becoming a flashback to the way things went on the last time, the happy ending of that affair leading us back to its duplicate ending in the present.

But the story itself turns out to be a lot of people talking to and answering each other in the same place, and nobody seems to be listening. There are some handsome sets, some minor business with things like a sculpture and an airport, one smooth leading performance by Ronald Colman, one destructive mussing up of comedy relief by Hugh O'Connell; but for action the hottest they ever get is when someone says, "If I'm going to dress for dinner I simply must *rush* upstairs," and rushes (no italics). John van Druten and Arnold Belgard adapted it from a play; and there is intelligence in the lines, plus wit; Lewis Milestone directed and there is a certain polish, a sense of where the exact center of a situation is and where a line should fall. But everyone seems to have forgotten that even if the acting wasn't generally stiff, as it was, and the heroine unsympathetic enough so no one should be bored with her, as she was and we can't help being, there is only as much story there as could be told with a shoebox full of lantern slides. And so what could be broadened into a book—which can spend a lot of time inside people's heads—has here been narrowed into a well finished but motionless picture, with mostly faces.

OTIS FERGUSON

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Cuff on the Mountain

WHEN KOUSSEVITSKY first came to Boston, about two decades ago, the boys who hung around Back Bay practice studios shook their heads. "Why, of course, the fellow simply *isn't* a musician," they would say, doubting that he could even take his double bass and get back his old job on the Volga riverboat save for some mysterious influence he had. It was his wife, or his wife's money, and besides he was from Russia. He was heartless. He fired the Italians. He would sit on his high stool in a bear crouch, with a gauzy curtain and the vast gloom of Symphony Hall behind him and take his toll. "You admit you mak mistake. You play ze nut F for E sharp. How can you make mistake when in ze musik is written ze nut E sharp?" Then he would ponder over the score in a silence broken only by the subdued stok stok of the janitor's broom in the darkness, and then, deciding in his own favor, he would raise his head blandly, questioningly, and pose the question again.

Koussie had ideas. One of his ideas was that no orchestra in the world could anticipate to a man the exact moment of the downbeat. So, he said, gentlemen, come in a split second after the downbeat. He told them how long to wait. Initial results were dismal. Probably no major orchestra anywhere had so ragged an attack, but through the murmurings, headshakings and whispers, he stuck to it doggedly, patiently, as he did to everything else. And finally there came a day when he could put Egmont first on the opening concert of the season, move in on it from the wings, stand there in silence after the applause died away, then let his baton hand drop slowly and stop, and in the pause brass and strings would hit the great unison F like a hammer, holding, and dying away like one instrument. Or in the third movement of Brahms Fourth he would push the violins down to a whisper, pause, and with a flick of his finger produce a great solid wall of sound, soaring with the clean vertical line of a skyscraper.

From the beginning Koussevitsky never used his arms much. He wouldn't be hurried, he wouldn't claw the air for sound. He never seemed even to walk toward the podium, he *moved* toward it, stolid, impassive, like a mountain, the only sign of the tension which takes pounds off some conductors in a single concert being a constant preoccupation with his cuff. The perennial cuff. It always needed fixing.

It is curious that from this slow-moving, ponderous Russian the most subtle and delicate orchestral style should develop. Even during his early association with the Boston Symphony, when he was still learning fast, he was listening for individual tones, and grouping them about him. He knew what he wanted—the veiled, misty flute tone of Laurent, the clear, beautifully tempered trumpet of the puffy Mager; two solo horns to use alternately, one brilliant and sharp, the other mellow and spreading; a reedy rather than a full German bassoon; a combined trombone-tuba tone not flat, and not so much broad as round—so round you could *see* it as a great bronze cylinder, and so on through his every instrument until he had before him an almost inexhaustible palette of color combination.

All this is leading up to something, of course, that something being the latest release of the Boston Symphony—Mozart's Symphonies No. 29 in A Major, and No. 34 in C Major (Victor M-795; 10 sides; $5), neither of which could probably have wiggled out of Victor's "Connoisseur Corner," much less rate an attractive red-and-blue cover with Mozart's bust on the album, were it not for the special treatment given them by Koussevitsky. For these are among the little tid-bits which he occasionally gathers to see what can be made out of minor material. Mozart wrote the A Major symphony (K. 201) while he was only 18, and the C Major work (K. 388) while more serious and more subjective, offers very little in the way of development and exposition. But in both there is an outpouring of melody as free as water from a spring, and these, worked over with seeming great patience and care, are here given flash and sparkle, running gracefully one into another with a result which, if not deep, is completely charming.

Out in Rochester, where Iturbi recently elected both to play and conduct the Rochester Philharmonic through Mozart's D Minor Piano Concerto, this interesting maneuver worked in reverse. Here the material was of the highest order, but the performance falls far below it (Victor M-794; 7 sides; $4.50). The thing begins to fold with the opening notes of the orchestral introduction, where the autumnal, somber shadings somehow do not come off properly, and on Iturbi's first entrance it is obviously a retreat. His hard swift jabbing at the keys, his stiff unbending inflexibility is apt to be surprising to anyone who has heard him hold an audience breathless in the Emperor Concerto in years past, and to raise questions. Is he taking on more than he can handle in trying to conduct and play at the same time, or has he simply gone sour? Repeated playings of this album suggest that the answer involves a little of both. Of Iturbi's brilliance as a pianist there is no question, but the humanity and feeling which gave birth to this concerto is not there—or if it is, I haven't heard it. But I must not overlook the filler—the delightful little overture to *Cosi Fan Tutti* which, as played here by Boult and the BBC Orchestra, is a honey.

Continuing what seems to be a cycle of Mozart symphonies, Sir Thomas Beecham has done K. 543 in E Flat with the London Philharmonic (Columbia, 6 sides; $3.50), and done it in his characteristic style, which is to say warmly, amiably, and expertly. The choice between this and the version Walter did for Victor with the BBC Orchestra some years ago is not easy, although the differences are marked. Whereas Beecham's is mellow and even tender, Walter's is brilliant, clean-cut, and quite beautifully recorded, though disturbed sometimes by some rather strange accents—as in the ascending passages in which the first violins run into a repetitious high note in the slow movement. In the *Minuetto* trio, which is probably the best-known movement of the symphony, Beecham's clarinet is half-buried behind the strings, and Walter's, though clear and expertly phrased, is a little off-key.

If some sort of general prize were to be given out this year in the recording field, as in the case of books, newspapers and movies, I would cast my vote now for the four Budapests, who should still be resting on the laurels due from their recording of Beethoven's C Sharp Minor Quartet, Opus 131, but they are now here with Mozart's Quartet No. 18 in G Minor (421 in the Koechel catalogue), which they have recorded for Columbia (M-642,

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6 sides; $3.50). It is a curiously poignant work, with many of the foreboding undertones of the G Minor Symphony, and a deceptive one—deceptive in its seeming simplicity, and in its surface affability. The little octave jumps in the Minuet, which sound so freely and gracefully under the bows of the Budapests, are the sort of thing that gets good musicians tearing little papers to shreds and muttering vacantly. But it seems no trouble to the four Bs. They play as one man—you might almost think as the composer would hear it in his own mind spinning it out, wistfully, a little sad, adding one more page to that great record.

STANLEY FERGUSON

A Communication

Union of the Democracies

SIR: Progress toward a better future requires a clearer recognition of the disastrous breakdown of the independent sovereign-state system, a greater understanding of the trend toward world power and a willingness to fight for the right kind of world government.

A deceptively attractive case still being made for isolation considers North America as a sort of island with great natural defensive advantages. Separated from the other great powers by more than four thousand miles to the west and nearly three thousand miles to the east, the United States surely presents a picture of unparalleled strategic strength and immunity from successful invasion. Somewhere in the world the torch of civilization must be kept burning.

The fact is that life in a country begins to deteriorate from the moment its security is seriously threatened, however good the chances appear to be of resisting military invasion. Consider what Englishmen have given up in recent years and the beginnings of change in the lives of Americans. The speed of modern transportation by land, air and sea, as demonstrated in the progress of the new European war, has not made invasion of this hemisphere easy but has made it increasingly possible.

Another popular case for isolation sees great regional groupings of countries living at peace, each dominated by a great power: the Far East by Japan; Europe, most of Asia and Africa by either Germany or England; most of the Western Hemisphere by the United States.

How can anyone study the map of the world for even a few moments without coming to the conclusion that such a political line-up would be merely a makeshift? Europe, Asia and the Far East are merely names for different parts of one big piece of real estate. North and South America constitute another large plot of land. Considering the narrow Bering Straits, Greenland, Iceland, the eastern bulge in South America, the western bulge in Africa, the various islands and present transportation speeds, North and South America are virtually joined with all of the other continents.

The "world" is a name which has always meant the known world. The "world empires" have been powers dominating not the whole globe as we know it today but that part of it which they could reach with their armed forces and subdue. Where it required years at the time of Alexander, and weeks or months at the time of Napoleon, to transport enough force to subdue uprisings in conquered regions, it is now a matter of days or a prompt visit by planes. This means, simply, that the proportion of the total territory and population which can be brought under the domination of one power has become so vast that it already is, or soon will be, the whole planet.

The outstanding cause of the present ills of mankind is the breakdown of the independent sovereign-state system in which each country maintains its own complete war machine, its own trade barriers and fluctuating currency.

The basic trend in government, which now overshadows all other tendencies, is that toward world power. We shall have either a world-conquering state which maintains its predominance by force and destruction of opposition, or a democratic world government.

The biggest fact in modern political history is the successful record of the federal-union form of government in America, Canada and Switzerland. The populations in these areas had, previous to union, been torn by dissensions so great that in the case of the United States many foreign observers predicted confidently that the country could never remain united. Yet while Europe has been afflicted with a long series of internal wars, the states in the vast American territory have remained at peace with each other for 152 years except for one avoidable civil war; those in Canada for 74 years; in Switzerland for nearly a century.

Some believe in union but not in a formal government. The London Economist of May 17,[1] for example, finds "nothing in public affairs more worth working and fighting for than the closest possible unity of the British and American states and people." But it proposes to move toward unity via an "Atlantic Commonwealth" modeled after the British Commonwealth of Nations because it fears that Clarence Streit's proposal of a representative government might leave England in a more dangerous and exposed position than ever, while in a union congress one house maneuvers against another and both are at loggerheads with the executive. This fear has some justification, and it is important for Americans to recognize that our own Constitution combined features of various colonial and other systems, and that we should use as models the most successful democratic governments, not simply the American type. Streit has insisted that the details of his proposal be considered as illustrative and not as a hard-and-fast plan.

Without throwing bricks at one another we, in the democracies, should all admit that our foreign policies and defense could hardly have been handled worse. Had the states in America retained their full sovereignty and continued to deal with one another as independent communities, there would almost certainly have been a long series of wars for power or other advantages. The same would have been true in Canada, Switzerland and South Africa. The weakness in lack of union government is illustrated at the moment by the fact that Ireland may at any time be used again as a stepping-stone by the enemies of Great Britain. At the period of great crisis in 1914, the empire countries could not present a united front ready to mobilize their full resources on short notice in the event of attack or expected attack on any member. The dominions of the British Common-

[1] In an editorial reprinted in condensed form in The New Republic, June 30, 1941.

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wealth were drawn into the present war unprepared and on short notice. We are now being drawn in. There is little reason to believe that had the United States been a member of an Atlantic Commonwealth there would have been any greater preparedness for common defense or a united front ready for prompt mobilization of resources.

We face the danger of the masses losing faith in democracy's ability to satisfy their hopes. Something new must be created if we are to progress toward the objectives upon which all democracies would agree: to establish justice, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity. Isolationism has nothing more to offer than a continuance of the independent sovereign-state system which has proven such a disastrous failure. Cumbersome though it may be, representative world government by the peoples of the democracies, together with a bill of rights, offers a program as hopeful and practical in a modern way as that proposed in 1787 by the men who assembled in Philadelphia.

New York City BORDEN HELMER

The Bandwagon

In every sector of the Eastern front the Russians are continuing to resist so stubbornly that between the Drut and Berezina Rivers they have virtually regained some of their lost ground. . . .

German sources ascribe this resistance to the energy of despair. . . . – *From The New York Times.*

In peace times, the Four Hundred pretty well ignores all ranks below those at the very top unless the officer is social in his own right.

Comes the threat of war, however, and society can't do too much for the men in uniform. Second lieutenants and ensigns are suddenly not only socially acceptable but eminently desirable as dinner and dancing partners.

But gobs and privates continue to be regarded as untouchables unless they happen to come from top-drawer families. – *From Nancy Randolph's society column in The Daily News.*

What is said here is limited to what is said here.

This article deals with the proposed price-control law—a law to keep prices from going up—a price-keeping-down law. About that proposal this article will imply an opinion—or, rather raise a question—in the hope that readers will think about it. But about nothing else does this article even hint an opinion. – *From Mark Sullivan's column in The New York Herald Tribune.*

Weekly, Norfolk, Virginia, soon to go semi-weekly, wants crack newsman assist editor in news, editorial, makeup. Must have imagination, ability, nose for news, sense of humor, guts. No scandal sheet but prints truth without fear or favor. No booze hounds or journalists need apply. – *Advertisement appearing in Editor & Publisher.*

Virginio Gayda, authoritative Fascist editor, predicted today that "an Axis victory would give India her independence." – *Dispatch from Rome in The Binghamton Press.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

The Army Prepares for Peace

SIR: Compared with the disagreements of reports about the army, reports from totalitarian countries are completely in accord. Certainly Earl Browder's and George Sokolsky's accounts of life in the Soviet Union are not nearly so disparate, for instance, as a description of army life in Life and a selectee's letter to The New Republic. Does no one grasp that there are several armies, and that if the starry-eyed descriptions are never right that does not mean that the bitter ones always are?

A strong democracy can afford to maintain useless institutions such as the peacetime army. Essentially the peacetime army was a popular myth, perpetuated by the movies, by Fourth of July parades and campaign oratory. In its upper ranks it provided satisfaction for many a martinet who needed the reassurance provided by a parade and the archaisms of military courtesy. At lower levels it was a haven for the sadistic, the alcoholic and the lazy, as well as a disillusionment to those who had been promised adventure after joining. The peacetime army had practically nothing to do with war. Its typical activities were close-order drill, shining shoes, and the payday binge. The training of officers, commissioned and non-commissioned, devoted so much time to the army way of doing things, that no time was left over for the study of warfare. Except in a few technical branches intelligence was a distinct handicap. This was the natural military reaction to a time of peace when all their effort must necessarily be formal and useless.

An army can afford to be the most inefficient peacetime organization in the nation if in time of war it becomes the most efficient. I have spoken of the peacetime army in the past tense but this is speaking wishfully. At present the full organization of the peacetime army is flourishing beautifully, and is doing its best to prevent the development of any wartime army.

Now life in the present, predominantly peacetime army is not unpleasant. Don't let anybody tell you that. The food is edible (though those accounts you read in popular magazines of our delicious and well-balanced menus are pure fantasy), it is possible to sleep in the beds, and army uniforms are of good quality. But these are not the important things. I don't think there is a single selectee who would really resent difficult living conditions if he felt they were in any way necessary. But when a man is torn up from civilian life to be put into an army whose main activities are the counterfeits of usefulness, he becomes a bit resentful of any discomfort. The general level of army duty is typified in our care of our trucks: we polish and wash the outside until it is spotless. The motor is not seen and therefore it lacks even the essential attentions.

Our training and instruction are at about the same level. Given by non-coms and officers who often do not understand

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the matter themselves, it is always disorganized, invariably repetitious, often erroneous. This training is the sort of thing which makes us enraged when General Marshall says that we will require more than a year to be adequately trained. Time and again you hear the draftees' answer, "All right, give us the training and let us do the work, but send us home after the four months are finished." But the army would rather spread the light work of four months over several years. Or perhaps it wouldn't. Above all the impression the draftee gets is that actually the army hasn't thought about the matter. There are the forms, and the printed materials all about "training." But somehow we aren't trained.

It's up to somebody to let the army know there's a national emergency on.

Fort Lewis, Washington PRIVATE A. L. O.

The Question of War Guilt

SIR: How can you be so extraordinarily obtuse, as in the last paragraph of your reply to Mr. William Taylor (The New Republic, July 28)? Are you, like the gentlemen of the far left, going to deny the most obvious evidence whenever it pleases you, to your own ultimate undoing?

You yourself have said that after Munich all rules were off, no holds were barred. You have repeatedly proved that Nazi Germany has from the beginning aimed at the destruction and despoiling of Soviet Russia. You have helped expose the intrigue of British appeasers in their calculating effort to foment a Russo-German war. I don't suppose Stalin reads The New Republic, but if he should he would have found ample justification for his policy.

I'm a heluva ways from being a Communist, so far in fact that I can't shut my eyes to the obvious as they can so frequently and easily. And I must admit the masterfful strategy which has given Russia a combination of time, buffer territory, and powerful allies, all of whom would have, in the normal course of events, been joined against her.

After Munich it was every man for himself; you said so yourself. Sure Stalin hoped England and Germany would "exhaust themselves and let Russia alone." Wherein was that worse than England's like ambition for Russia and Germany? And if Russia won the first heat, it wasn't because she started first. Chamberlain's bunch was just outsmarted.

Yours for all-out aid to Britain,

Richmond, Kentucky JAMES E. VAN PEURSEM

SIR: As an old and continued subscriber to The New Republic, I ask to be told exactly who are the persons on your staff who signed the completely nonsensical reply to Mr. William Taylor's letter, page 120, issue of July 28: "We believe Stalin started the European war, through signing his pact with Hitler, in the hope that the Great Powers would exhaust themselves, and let Russia alone."

I believe Hitler started the European war for the aggrandizement of Germany, and the domination of the world. I believe this was made possible by the Chamberlain government in England with its policy of appeasement, its refusal to join the USSR in its policy of collective security. I believe this mistaken policy of England forced Russia into the arms of Germany for its own self-protection. I believe that today, the USSR's old policy of collective action, for Great Britain, the United States and the USSR, is the only hope for world peace and world happiness. I also believe in Union Now. Do you believe that the United States is staying out of formal war in the hope that the great powers will exhaust themselves in order that we can dominate them when they do?

If you do not like my beliefs, I refer you to old copies of The New Republic wherein many experts directed the thinking and conclusions which I now voice. May "The Editors" study and digest the back files of The New Republic.

Tiverton, R. I. WILDA MACKENZIE

[Mr. Van Puersem scolds us for three paragraphs and then admits our statement is true. We said nothing whatever about whether Russia's attitude was better or worse than England's. Everyone knows that Chamberlain hoped for a German-Russian war.

Miss Mackenzie would evidently be satisfied if we had said Stalin "made it possible for Hitler to start the European war." Since this was obviously the meaning of our passage, we would have no objection to the change in phraseology. — THE EDITORS]

Gasoline and Patriotism

SIR: By closing gasoline filling stations at night in the East, the petroleum industry has, in accordance with its traditional policies of doing business (1) reduced operating costs, light, heat, etc., (2) reduced payroll costs, fewer men being needed because of the shortened hours and (3) by planning to increase the cost of gasoline two cents a gallon, will effectively curtail consumption and expand net profits. It is a typical example of corporate sacrifice.

One difficulty is certain: soon gas and oil stocks will become a far more attractive investment than National Defense Bonds.

Cambridge, Mass. EDWARD GRACE

Frankensteen at Inglewood

SIR: The letter published in your issue of July 7, 1941, and signed by Ella Winter, contained some interesting musings presented as "on the spot facts" [regarding] the North American situation.

Apologists and free-lance advisers seek to (a) say that Inglewood and regional officials of the UAW were right in their attitudes, and then attack Messrs. Frankensteen and Thomas for opposing them; (b) say they were wrong, excuse them on the basis of their inexperience, or on the basis that urgency of their situation justified non-adherence to trade union procedures, and then attack Messrs. Frankensteen and Thomas for forcing these mistakes upon them, provoking the strike and then abandoning the workers because ex-GM President Knudsen (GM controls 29 percent of North American stock) told them in Washington that strikes were not nice any more!

If Miss Winter will bow to someone who was closer to the situation than herself, she will revise her conception of "facts" to conform somewhat more nearly to the following:

Negotiations *had* dragged on for many weeks, not in Washington, but in Inglewood. For the very reason that little was being accomplished Mr. Frankensteen recommended the strike vote in order to break the deadlock and secure certification to the National Defense Mediation Board, which had a very favorable record in the settlement of disputes involving our organization.

Although a panel was not immediately available in Washington, the company and the union, assisted by the board, negotiated an agreement which provided that in return for a retroactive pay clause, making all gains effective as of May 1, 1941, the union would withhold strike action until three days after the board had completed and published its findings. While Mr. Frankensteen was absent from negotiations in Washington for three days in order to complete a new wage agreement with Chrysler in Detroit, conferences progressed without any complaint from either party or the board.

Mr. Frankensteen was first notified of imminent strike action by the press in Detroit. Upon communication with union nego-

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tiators in Washington he was told this was a "rumor" without basis in fact. However, when he called Inglewood, he learned otherwise, and in a forty-five-minute phone conversation he was unable to persuade local leaders to abide by the agreement made with the Mediation Board.

The union negotiators before the National Defense Mediation Board in Washington still played dumb and pretended they knew nothing of the walkout except what they read in the papers. Later, however, they boasted that they had ordered the walkout by long distance because the board was "stalling"—a ridiculous charge parroted in Inglewood by local leaders despite the record of the board and the fact that the Mine Workers Secretary-Treasurer, Thomas Kennedy, was a member of the panel.

Whereupon Frankensteen flew to Inglewood and spent two days attempting to persuade local leaders to end their walkout so that negotiations might be resumed. He was able to persuade the government that drastic action would not be necessary principally because UAW leaders at a meeting on Friday, June 6, 1941, agreed to follow the recommendations of Frankensteen and Murray to end the walkout. It was only when these same leaders reversed their position, defied Frankensteen and Murray, and refused to allow the former to speak to local union sub-leaders and membership, that Frankensteen went on CBS and urged the workers to end their wildcat strike.

Fortunately for the union, though unfortunately for leftist Cassandras, the pat prophecies about what the use of troops would entail have not been upheld. Despite the many unfortunate incidents, and the ominous pattern which surrounded the use of troops, collective bargaining was never voided. With the assistance of the National Defense Mediation Board the union negotiated the best contract in the aviation industry, achieving the principal demands of the workers, and more. The contract was ratified unanimously by our membership at North American on July 1, 1941. The union is now stronger than ever before—in fact Local 887 at North American is now the largest CIO union on the coast.

The actions of Mr. Frankensteen in the situation have been upheld by a unanimous vote of confidence from the workers involved and a unanimous vote of approval from the International Executive Board of our union.

WILLIAM DUFFY, Director of Publicity,
Los Angeles, Calif. Aviation Division UAW-CIO

Guns and Butter

SIR: The Australian Parliament recently passed child endowment legislation (operative this month) to provide, at a cost of $52,000,000 a year, payment of five shillings, or about $1 a week, for each child in excess of one in every family.

Guns are not neglected. In the last financial year, Australia devoted one-fifth of the national income to the war budget. The current year's war budget will be higher still. War costs for the four years from 1938 are expected to exceed $1,200,000,000. Not only the troops of Axis powers who have met the Anzacs in battle, but the Empire and Allied countries which have received millions of dollars' worth of war supplies from Australia know that guns and butter can come from the same storehouse.

The Child Endowment Act brings butter to more than one million children under sixteen. Said Labor Minister Harold Holt: "You are asked to look at this measure as a means of providing that, no matter how the war pinches our incomes, the basic needs of the family will still be satisfied. You are asked to accept it as one of the few measures of social progress that it is possible to introduce in time of war, and to regard it as a foretaste and pledge of the full reconstruction that will be possible when we can again turn our surplus productive forces to the purposes of peace. Child endowment can rightly be considered as a profitable national investment. We may reasonably expect among the consequences some reduction in mortality among children, and an improvement in health and quality. It will insure that the exigencies of war will not take necessary food and clothing from the children."

The scheme is financed by a tax of two and one-half percent on all payrolls in excess of $80 a week or $4,160 a year, which will provide $36,000,000. Another $8,000,000 will be raised by abolition of income-tax exemptions for each child after the first. The remainder will come from general revenue. Claims of a parent or guardian for endowment must be based on actual responsibility for maintenance and not on natural relationship.

Australia's child-endowment scheme brings it into line with the other democracy in the south Pacific, New Zealand. Both New Zealand and Australia pay maternity benefits. The annual cost of maternity benefits to Australia in 1940 was $1,667,956. New Zealand came later into the field of social-security measures than did Australia. Thus Australia pays a flat old age, invalid and other pensions (liability up to June 30, 1940, was $66,000,000), whereas New Zealand's labor government introduced universal contributory social insurance. Richard G. Casey, Australian Minister to the United States, framed similar legislation for Australia as pre-war Treasurer, but the war swamped it. Nevertheless, I venture to present Australia's continuance, in time of war, of a liberal legislative policy, as a gleam of light in a blacked-out world. DAVID W. BAILEY, Director,
New York City Australian News and Information Bureau

From The New Republic Mail Bag

A national committee for Medical Aid to the Soviet Union is being organized in New York City to send medical supplies and surgical instruments for military and civilian victims of the war in Russia. Under the sponsorship of welfare and church leaders, editors and educators, the committee will concentrate its efforts on raising funds for these supplies. Contributions may be mailed to H. Harriet Moore, Secretary-Treasurer, Room 1006, 56 West Forty-fifth Street, New York City.

Sholom Kahn of El Paso, Texas, thinks Randell Jarrell's article on "Contemporary Poetry Criticism" (The New Republic, July 21), "covers the ground judiciously and thoroughly," but he believes Mark Van Doren is a "must" in considering modern critics, especially for his work in restoring "the damaged fame of John Dryden." . . . Richard Greenleaf of Winter Park, Florida, however, takes issue with Mr. Jarrell's remark that we can simply disregard the political views of the Allen Tate school of critics and "have that much more time for their criticism." Mr. Greenleaf believes the criticism of all of them is closely dependent upon their politics, and disparages even The New Republic's "disregard of political views where creative writing is concerned."

Reverend Clifford R. Cave of Chana, New Mexico, sends his appreciation for The New Republic's numerous disclosures of the monopoly practices of the steel, aluminum and airplane industries in preventing plant expansion, pegging prices, etc. Dr. Cave wonders how these companies can plead a shortage of capital funds for expansion and the necessity for high prices at the same time they carry expensive full-page ads applauding themselves in national magazines.

The New Republic has received a large number of letters and clippings about the labor-union campaign against the Donnelley Press of Chicago, which does not maintain union conditions. The union publicity points out that Time and Life are printed, at least in some of their editions, at this press and suggests that union members might read several substitutes, among which is named The New Republic.

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Books in Review

Critical Quiverful

BUT ALL THESE CIRCUMSTANCES are worth knowing and bearing in mind, because they help us to understand what Dickens was trying to say." This sentence, from the first and perhaps the best of the seven essays which comprise this book,[1] indicates rather neatly the kind of criticism of which Edmund Wilson has for some time been a brilliant practitioner. The function of the literary critic, as Wilson seems to conceive it, is to enlarge the unit observed by the reader until it includes not merely the text of a work of art, or even a group of such texts, but the whole pattern of influence and causation, of action and reaction, of sociological and psychological forces, of which the given work is the center. But this enlargement is achieved not simply as a contribution to history; it is also intended as a contribution to esthetic understanding and appreciation. If we arrive late at a concert at which the first item played is a set of variations on a theme, and we take our seat as the third variation is being played, *imagining it to be the theme*, we shall have got the wrong perspective on the whole piece of music, we will be hearing the wrong pattern, however keen our ear. But if we are familiar enough with the music to be able to supply the main theme mentally as we hear the further variations, or if some one puts a score of the main theme into our hand, this error will be corrected and we shall be able to get the proper significance out of the music.

In some sense, it might be said that for Wilson the literature produced by any writer can best be understood as variations on a theme. The theme is the writer's life and circumstances, in the most complete sense, and we can only be sure of seeing the right pattern in the particular works if we are able to relate them to the theme on which they are unconscious variations. Yet it is not always, Wilson would admit, quite as simple as that. We cannot always be sure which is the air and which the variations: sometimes the relationship between the writer's life and his work is so complex and subtle that it would be false to regard the latter simply as variations on the former; each throws light on the other, the man puts the work in its right perspective, but perhaps as a key signature helps us in reading a piece of music or as a frame brings out the proper relationship between the parts and the whole in a picture. At all events, the critic has a duty to discover and present *interpretations* of works of art based on an understanding of the artist's nature and purposes. Such activity may not tell us what esthetic norms are, but it might help us to discover what esthetic activity *is*, at least in a genetic sense. "It is necessary to see him [Dickens] as a man in order to appreciate him as an artist." "The work of Dickens' whole career was an attempt to digest these early shocks and hardships, to explain them to himself, to justify himself in relation to them. . . ." Or consider the question Wilson asks himself at the beginning of his essay on Kipling: "But who *was* Kipling?"

In such criticism normative judgments must either be implicit or casual. The critic is concerned primarily with making a contribution to knowledge. He is not developing a theory of what is good and bad in art, but is concerned to show how a writer will write a good work at twenty-five and a pitifully bad one at fifty. His values he accepts from tradition, or indicates negligently without proof. Thus, in a discussion of the meaning and origins of Kipling's "Stalky & Co.," Wilson notes in parenthesis that it is "from the artistic point of view, certainly the worst of Kipling's books: crude in writing, trashy in feeling, implausible in a series of contrivances which resemble moving-picture 'gags.'" These esthetic criteria are accepted casually as self-evident; he is not concerned with proving them. Or, in the midst of a very thorough investigation into the significance of "Kim" and its relation to Kipling's life and mind, Wilson observes that it is "an enchanting, almost a first-rate book, the work in which more perhaps than in any other he gave the sympathies of the imagination free rein to remember and to explore, and which has in consequence more complexity and density than any other of his works." Here the criteria of "complexity" and "density" are accepted from tradition. When he does lay down his own system of values, he does it casually, and with no attempt at elaboration or proof. The great novelist, he comments incidentally in discussing Kipling's "lack of success with long novels," "must show us large social forces, or uncontrollable lines of destiny, or antagonistic impulses of the human spirit, struggling with one another."

But the lack of a polemical value scheme is in no sense a defect in this kind of criticism, for it is interpretative and explanatory rather than normative, and interpretation and explanation are valuable activities in their own right. They must, of course, imply some view of good and bad in art, and underlying Wilson's essays there lies a fairly consistent "common sense" esthetic. But those whose main concern is with esthetic theory should welcome a critic who spends his time explaining the *nature* rather than the value of works of art, for this is to give the theoreticians both a firm basis (they should know now just what their data are) and a clear field.

The essays on Dickens and Kipling are thoughtful and, on the whole, convincing interpretations, made with constant reference to psychological and sociological fact. They both fill a real want, particularly, perhaps, that on Kipling, though the explanation of the later Kipling is rather simple to be altogether persuasive. The third essay, on Casanova, is a little piece of intelligent chat which disappoints us by not going so far as it might, while the essay on Edith Wharton has a false air of completeness—it is really rather patchy, though full of good remarks. The discussion of Hemingway is good in spite of its slovenliness: if Wilson had taken the trouble to rework it to include his discussion of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" instead of slipping in that discussion in a belated footnote, the essay would be a better

[1] The Wound and the Bow, Seven Studies in Literature, by Edmund Wilson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 295 pages. $3.

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one. The same is true of the two articles on "Finnegans Wake," which were admirable introductions to Joyce's new work when they first appeared, but which might have been reworked in the light of Wilson's further reading instead of propped with footnotes. "The Wound and the Bow," a discussion and interpretation of Sophocles' "Philoctetes," is a bright piece of suggestive thinking, an exciting little exercise, with a moral.

One is left with the wish that Wilson would develop his insights more thoroughly. Is it lack of staying-power or fear and scorn of the academic tradition that makes some of our best critics write notebooks rather than volumes? It would be unfair to charge the author of "To the Finland Station" with the former, so perhaps it is the latter. Whatever the cause, at least one reader wishes these essays had been longer.

DAVID DAICHES

Labor in Britain

British Labour's Rise to Power, by Carl F. Brand. Stanford University Press. 305 pages. $3.50.
Bevin and Co., by Patricia Strauss. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 246 pages. $2.50.
Labour in the War, by John Price. New York: Penguin Books, Inc. 176 pages. 25 cents.

DESPITE ITS TITLE, "British Labour's Rise to Power" is scarcely a continuous history of the movement; the eight studies that comprise the volume deal with some special phases of Labor's development—the conversion of the trade unions to political action, Labor's attitude to Wilson, its peace aims and reconstruction program in the last war, its long struggle with the Communist Party. Mr. Brand has collected considerable data that will be of value to the student. But he has unfortunately failed to set that material against the background of social and economic development that alone can give it meaning and significance. There is inadequate discussion of the doctrinal basis of the movement that is an important key to its history; the author might well have examined the roots of British Labor in Fabianism and the results of those origins on Labor's policy, on its interpretation of such phenomena as the economic crisis of the twenties and the rise of fascism. And there is little here to help the American reader to an understanding of Labor's rise to a position of paramount importance in the state, or of its debacle of 1929-31 and the decade it subsequently spent wandering in the desert of political ineffectuality.

What Dr. Brand fails to achieve in his somber academic treatise, Patricia Strauss accomplishes most effectively in her delightful and refreshing volume. The wife of one of the younger and more dynamic Labor M. P.'s, and in her own right an active member of the party, Mrs. Strauss tells a living, human story from first-hand experience. We get an intimate picture of the life of the local groups; of the impact of the party on the thousands of penny-a-weekers who are its backbone; of their devotion and loyalty to a political organization wholly their own; of their determination to build for themselves a better society; and of their grim and unyielding recognition that the destruction of fascism is a prime condition of that effort.

Mrs. Strauss has long been one of those who have been urging on the party a more aggressive policy and in her sketches of its leaders she is unsparingly frank in her criticism. She has considerable respect for the ability of the right-wingers and trade unionists, but somewhat less regard for their politics and social philosophy. Among the Party's leaders, she finds few—if any—first-rate statesmen; and their prominence is largely the result not of their ability, which in many instances is great indeed, but of the party they represent. On Attlee, on Greenwood, on Dalton, on Morrison, Mrs. Strauss' comments are just and shrewd. She is harsh in her criticism of Bevin. Intensely able, he is moved more by ambition and a desire for security than by any consuming passion for social justice; and he has consistently been unsympathetic to the political activities of the movement. Mrs. Strauss reserves most of her admiration for Sir Stafford Cripps; one gathers that he is the one person in the Labor leadership in whose ability to guide the country she has complete confidence. And it is not without significance that Cripps is probably the only Labor leader who has increased in stature during the past six months.

Mrs. Strauss makes no effort to conceal her impatience with the conservatism of the official leadership. That conservatism, she continually implies, has been responsible for most of the party's failures. In every crucial instance during the past several years—on Spain, on fascism, on collective security—the political intuition of the rank-and-file has been far more accurate than the political wisdom of the leadership. Largely, that conservatism derives from the trade unions which, because of their greater membership and financial resources, decisively shape party policy. For, as Mrs. Strauss points out:

> trade unions are bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the capitalist system. . . . They do not want to overthrow the capitalist system, they are an integral part of it. With every gain the trade unions become more comfortably cradled in society.

And she is concerned by the fact that the suspension of the political activities of the movement by the exigencies of war is serving to increase the influence of the unions as against that of the local parties.

If "Bevin and Co." concerns itself almost exclusively with the political activities of the labor movement, John Price's little book is an extremely useful, straightforward account of the work of the trade unions in wartime. Here is the detailed story of the struggle of organized labor for recognition of its right to share in the making of national policy, the virtual denial of that recognition by the Chamberlain government and the elevation of labor to the status of a co-partner in the war effort with the entrance of its representatives into the government in May, 1940. Mr. Price relates in detail the vast range of the unions' activities—their participation not merely in what are narrowly conceived as labor problems but in shaping and planning the entire industrial and economic effort of the country. The lesson for America that emerges from his pages can be expressed no better than by a statement of Bevin's in the early months of the war, quoted by Price:

> We represent probably the most vital factor in the state; without our people this war cannot be won, nor can the life of the country be carried on. The assumption that the only brains of the country are in the heads of the Federation of British Indus-

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tries and Big Business is one which has got to be corrected, for, as a matter of fact, most of the delays and unpreparedness so apparent today are due to the reliance of the Departments of State upon the very limited advice of people who, after all, live in a very narrow world indeed.

That statement might well be posted on every billboard in Washington. DAVID W. PETEGORSKY

Three Novels, or Nearly

Send Me Down, by Henry Steig. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 461 pages. $2.50.
The Battlers, by Kylie Tennant. New York: The Macmillan Company. 405 pages. $2.50.
The Passionate Witch, by Thorne Smith; completed by Norman Matson. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 273 pages. $2.

HENRY STEIG's book about jazz musicians is neither good fiction nor good music talk, perhaps from the strain of trying alternately to be both. The title itself is a sort of promise that no really good musician would be found dead in the book, and that no one found there will be anything else. It is self-conscious with a crew haircut. The publisher makes something of the fact that Henry Steig once worked in the chop-suey circuit of popular music—which is certainly as close to jazz as composing car cards is to literature; and the author makes even more out of the careers of people who do not, except by the coincidence which is immune from civil suit, appear in the story as Benny Goodman, John Hammond, Billie Holiday, etc. The surface resemblance is half casual, half damning in its grouping of known facts; the fictional character in each case is one who could never have lived because one thing about him destroys another.

I do not mean that the book was intended for gossip. It is on the contrary a serious attempt to set down the facts about a form of music that is as little understood as, shall we say, music in general. It is the story of two brothers who started out taking lessons and playing in the school orchestra, but heard the new jazz and dedicated the rest of their lives into cutting themselves off a piece of it. One of them, I forget which, discovered quite conveniently that he had absolute pitch; the other was more defiled and discovered at an early age that he had hair growing in places. One of them just kept messing around Chicago and places playing so hot it would burn you.

The other brother also grew up, organized his own band and gradually rose from scuffling around in chow-mein palaces to be the king of swing and ding-dong daddy, with reed section and stuff. He is there to prove what is always an interesting subject of discussion in very small magazines devoted to very hot jazz, namely, how can one ever swing righteously and have more than four instruments in the band and cuffs on his pants? The answer, as here, is always that it can't be done on account of improvisation and something I forget (also forgotten in all such investigation are the following names, though never the awe of them: Henderson, Ellington, Oliver, McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Pollack, Shellac, Basie, Macy and Cottontail). There are also the questions of how can a white man ever be colored enough and what to do with marijuana until the doctor goes away.

There are also included vipers and cats and a young man who is not called John Hammond but seems to be a friend of the author because he is shown as being able to keep time without approximately. One brother goes eventually back to being righteous and sending the author down, I forget which—and that is the thing against the book, as a novel. There are a lot of people but you can't remember meeting any of them. All the small talk about jazz has to be thrown in, and there is not room to build up people as in life.

It would be too rough on the book to say you would not find it interesting if you were interested in jazz: it has a good deal of the way this music grew in our time and makes good sense on the way different types of musicians felt about it. Many of the facts about music as a business and as a career are there, whether you agree with the interpretation or not. And very few people seem to know very many of the facts. The trouble with the book as reading fiction, taking its place in the general field on its own merits, is that nothing happens. There haven't been many stories about jazz music but there have been better ones.

Kylie Tennant also has facts about the far and mysterious to offer and also fails to do anything much about them. But her rambling story about life on the road in Australia manages to get feeling into the situations and some very good descriptive writing done. The characters in "The Battlers" are something like our home-grown migratory laborers, but strict comparison is not possible and would take away the special color of the book. We know little enough of Australia, as they do not ship much out to us and I doubt Dorothy Lamour has been stranded there. They have a country with various regions to it and they have people with an argot that is closer to American slang than it is to the parent language of English (we discover, for example, that they have a Snow where we have a Whitey, a Cobber where we have a Buddy, *top off* for *tip off*, a set of place names as garish as our Indian derivatives and a good sprinkling of Americanisms).

The people of the book are always on the move, singly, in families, in groups, some on foot but more with bicycles, wagons, old trucks. They have a code of their own, they beg and steal, they work when they can get it to do—in canneries, at fruit picking or sheep-shearing—and they are kept on the move much as all gypsy types are: partly by being shoved and partly by being restless and partly by being very poor. There are dole stations something like sixty miles apart and the system is apparently to keep them from spending any two of the monthly dole days in any one place. For purposes of story the author has set up some marital situations, some labor organizing, some petty feuds and major disasters, and left them to work out as best they can. None of it is very exciting. All of it is sound and probable and different enough as a window on a kind of living to make it one of those familiar and companionable books you are always getting around to finish.

"The Passionate Witch" was still uncompleted when Thorne Smith died but has had an ending put on it and illustrations provided. It is the kind of light reading that gets pretty heavy after a while, not quite so funny as average Wodehouse but with the same rapid invention and

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feeling of deliberate effort. The idea is that a very civic and objectionable type of business man shall be married and put in a sort of crucible by a beautiful witch. Probably the best piece of fancy is the curse she puts upon him of hearing the thoughts of others, including his butler, so that he is driven to hard drink, which he had always condemned. All right, I didn't say it was very funny, did I? It is gay with puns and quite a bit naughty; but on the whole a bore.

OTIS FERGUSON

The Unholy Alliance

The Conservative Revolution, by Hermann Rauschning. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 288 pages. $2.75.

HAVING EXPRESSED his hatred for Hitler in "The Revolution of Nihilism" and "The Voice of Destruction," Hermann Rauschning now tries to explain why for three years he accepted Hitler as his overlord. The story he tells —in a series of letters to an unnamed Englishman—is a political tragi-comedy with elements of burlesque. Rauschning and his conservative friends were planning to use the Nazis for their own ends. The movement they represented had no basis in the masses; therefore they would not only join Hitler's party but would try to take it over. Hitler, they believed, was a horse they could ride in their own direction—and if they couldn't ride him, they would turn him out to pasture. The other Nazi leaders, whom they regarded as vulgar and self-seeking, would be replaced by a new elite, "a body of young men of experience, intelligence and initiative"; then everything in Germany would be nearly perfect. There were other German factions with much the same idea—for example, the big industrialists led by Fritz Thyssen and the "National Bolsheviks" who put their hopes in the Strasser brothers. All these factions contributed to Hitler's triumph, and all of them learned when it was too late that the vulgar Nazi leaders were too clever for them to handle, and too ruthless in clinging to power. The dupers were duped and the riders tossed off, some being killed by the fall. The sappers were blown sky-high by their own mine.

But it would be wrong to dismiss Rauschning's book as an episode out of the past, the story of a politician who failed and deserved to fail. The conservatives of his group had a program beyond the mere seizure of power, and one that has since been adopted by others. Briefly, they were working toward decentralization, toward a pluralistic state, toward a "community of corporations." They believed that in each industry or trade, the employers, the salaried employees and the workers should together form a corporation legally authorized to fix prices and wages and to limit production; it would be a permanent NRA. Some of these corporations would take the form of international cartels, thus binding Europe together. The national states would lose some of their political power, but they would have full cultural autonomy, and they would be united into a loose federal union, with Germany at its head. Factories would be smaller and more widely scattered; everyone would be encouraged to own land. Christianity would be reëstablished, and monarchy as well. There would be some repression, but not too much of it, and wherever possible the old institutions would be left undisturbed. So great is Rauschning's respect for traditional things that, in spite of his hatred for Marxism, he planned to preserve the Social Democrats as a licensed opposition.

Does this picture of the future seem absurd? It bears some relation to what Schuschnigg hoped to do in Austria, and Salazar in Portugal, and to what Pétain now talks of doing in France. It is close to the spirit of various papal encyclicals, though Rauschning himself is a Protestant. Obviously it bears no relation whatever to the sort of Europe that Hitler is trying to create. And yet, by a self-deception from which Rauschning was not the first to suffer, many believers in the "community of corporations" still cherish the delusion that a Nazi victory might lead by easy stages to the rebirth of a Christian society, and that Hitler is a horse they can ride. Rauschning's earlier books should have disabused them.

His present work, though it advocates a theory of government that is dangerous in the circumstances, and possibly unworkable at any time, is not without value. It explains what most Americans have failed to see: the moral strength of the Nazi movement and its appeal in the past to many honorable men. It conveys a truth that most of our radicals have failed to realize, in their traditionalism more obstinate than Rauschning's own: that the whole game of nineteenth-century politics is played out; that an era is coming to an end. And it makes a plea for common efforts in fighting Hitler and in planning the new Europe that might follow his defeat. Whatever that Europe may be, it will not correspond to any of our blueprints. Possibly it may include items from the programs of all the political parties, with honest conservatives like Rauschning contributing their share.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Experience of War

London Front: Letters Written to America, by F. Tennyson Jesse and H. M. Harwood. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 333 pages. $2.50.
Mansion House of Liberty, by Phyllis Bottome. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 264 pages. $2.50.

IT MAY APPEAR PETULANT to sigh over these two books, but it's not so much over what is stated as what is taken for granted in the American reading public. It's evident the British here are having a hard time sidetracking the knitting zeal of any little snob whose rotogravure allegiance to Britain alienates a dozen intelligent acquaintances—if she's for it, they're agin it. This is the way a lot of people are going to feel about Mrs. Grace Hubble, wife of the famous astronomer, who on page 56 of "London Front" remarks: "Of course, for Edwin and me, England is worth far more than all the rest of the world put together." It's a poor basis for American sympathy, and even for Aid to Britain—which is either a deliberate phase of American policy in the Atlantic, or nothing. What's interesting about this sort of writing now is why it doesn't make literature, and why it does make propaganda of doubtful worth to the country it springs from. During a war, reviewers work overtime certifying as imperishable almost any war literature that is sincere and rousing. Unhappily, war provides the material all right, but it also stimulates the excuse and the urge for anybody who can write to go after an emo-

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tional strain that is wholly beyond them. If this seems an odd diagnosis, try and name offhand the works of great literature that came out of the First World War. Where today are the proclaimed masterpieces of Barbellion, Montague, Zweig, Remarque?

Miss Bottome's book illustrates the type of literary defeat. She writes in a mood of exaltation that is undoubtedly a true possession of the fire-fighters, the homeless and the refugee Polish airmen that her book is about. This mood has prompted a continuing act of terrific resistance. It doesn't seem to prompt literature because literature requires a balance of human judgment and sympathies. The technical disturbance that marks this constant strain after nobility is what Dixon Scott noted in C. E. Montague—a tendency to fall into perfectly scannable blank verse. Dickens did it, whenever, short of sleep and charged with self-pity, he tried to distil his weepy mood into a particular tragedy. Miss Bottome is always on the edge of it. Her book is stirring at first reading, disquieting thereafter. She is writing about the human spirit, but the way she goes around England in search of it is the newspaperman's artifice: she always finds it. The Harwoods' letters are, also, racy cadenzas on the theme of the splendor of English, and refugee, character. You have to accept the theme to enjoy the cadenza playing.

Both books are written with a galloping moral sense of a clear principle being defended on the English front. But the pathos of this kind of writing is that it cannot transmit the impulse to action. It can supplement the appalling realism of the newsreels, the picture magazines, the wire-photos. But having these experiences is not the same as reading about them. It's the difference between seeing a movie and flipping the publicity stills through your fingers. And these brave chronicles will only further convince the converted.

ALISTAIR COOKE

Poet's Problem

I Went into the Country: A Collection of Poems, by Harry Roskolenko. Prairie City, Illinois: The Press of James A. Decker. 61 pages. $1.50.

MR. ROSKOLENKO doesn't write poems that are formal and restricted. Nor is he the owner of a precise language. "At aerial borders the races flee like birds" is a true line of Roskolenko's; it is an effort at capturing the total terror in society, and the poet goes about it with a language that is thick, profuse, turgid, as if the initial feeling mustn't be played with.

It is the virtue and the evil in his work. The poems are, at once, bold and hot-blooded and inchoate and careless. An improvement over his first book, "Sequence on Violence," because more orderly, "I Went into the Country" is still not ordered enough. The reader is impressed by wide experience of a certain kind, by capacity for feeling and imagery. But these fail to overtop (are counterbalanced by) the promiscuity of image and language. The poems are mixed up. You don't know what to make of them. It might be said that the poet has experienced *too much:* it is as if he himself is overwhelmed and yields too passively to the materials. In that sense Mr. Roskolenko is a serious person but not yet a serious poet. Even in the better poems—

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"Paternity" for example—he will weaken good work with an ill-considered last line. In "Western World" he compromises a poem of terror with the totally misplaced phrase, "Pilgrims of ponderables," which creates a comic effect that he could not have desired. The poem, "Faith," has a fine, ballad melody, but here again he disturbs his own mood with a venture into "satire": "In the whimper of it prayed Eliot with a bang!" Nearly all of it is like that, pretty much all of it is spoiled one way or another.

In spite of all this, Mr. Roskolenko has a great deal to recommend him: what he brings to poetry is important, what he has as experience, what he feels about experience, humanly, places him on a higher level than most of our now canonical young English poets. It is up to Mr. Roskolenko to review his talent, to "reduce" and intensify it. That is not to make the talent small or the poem less; rather, it is to make the talent large and the poem more. Mr. Roskolenko has a problem. But, at any rate, it is a more real one, a more advanced one, than those which confront many of the young poets today.

HARVEY BREIT

The Peer at Bay

A Great Experiment: An Autobiography, by Viscount Cecil (Lord Robert Cecil). New York: Oxford University Press. 390 pages. $3.50.

"THIS JUDGMENT I HAVE OF YOU," Queen Elizabeth said to Sir William Cecil, when she swore him in as a member of her council: "that you will not be corrupted with any manner of gift; that you will be faithful to the state, and that, without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best." Subsequent chiefs of state have sometimes not been anxious for advice contrary to their private will. Lord Robert Cecil faithfully obeyed the injunction that Queen Elizabeth gave his ancestor. If, nearly four centuries later, his counsel had been followed, recent history would have been different.

In a prefatory note to this autobiography, President Nicholas Murray Butler says that Viscount Cecil "has made a contribution of first importance to the history of international relations during the past generation." It is that, but hardly more. Lord Cecil tells us little of his early life. He apparently had scant interest in the then great whom he must have met when his father, Lord Salisbury, was Prime Minister and when for part of that time he was one of his private secretaries. The period of the war when he was Minister of Blockade and Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is barely mentioned. His principal interest was in the League of Nations, of which he was one of the spiritual parents and to which he was from time to time sent as a representative of the British government. There are a few revelations from the dark closet of British politics, but much of what Lord Cecil says has been said before. It gains force when repeated here by one of the authors of and actors in the drama.

At times Lord Cecil writes as if the League had been an institution quite independent from the hopes and motives, the sinister desires and selfish ambitions of the states that constituted its members. He has not pondered the truth of Bagehot's remark—that the men of Massachusetts could have worked *any* constitution. So the language of the Covenant, it seems to me, was never of high importance. If France and Britain had wanted to make the League work, they could have done so. Had Viscount Cecil not been the prisoner of Conservative governments, he might have helped it to work, particularly in respect of disarmament. But in 1927 he resigned because the British government was not yet willing to accept naval parity with the United States. If Viscount Cecil had resigned before; if, after he resigned, his criticism of the British government had been more forthright and vigorous, he might not have been so uninfluential. Of Stanley Baldwin, who accepted his resignation, he says that "his great personal charm and cultivation and his personal kindness to myself make it impossible for me to attempt any estimate of his character and abilities."

When the world is being threatened by international gangsters and when defense against their depredations depends on the courage and intelligence of those who are at the head of democratic governments; when lessons for the future must be learned from the mistakes of the past, it is hardly good pedagogy for a man who could be a great teacher to ignore the errors of a Prime Minister because he is charming and cultivated. There is a saying that the British have loved muddleheadedness in their statesmen and that when it has been coupled with character, they have groveled. Lord Cecil had character and he was clearheaded, but if his autobiography were not so reticent it would have greater influence.

LINDSAY ROGERS

Contributors

OTTO NATHAN is Associate Professor of Economics at New York University.

MAX WERNER's latest book is "Battle for the World: The Strategy and Diplomacy of the Second World War," recently published by Modern Age Books.

GEORGE BRITT is a New York newspaperman, co-author, with the late Heywood Broun, of "For Christians Only."

STANLEY FERGUSON is on the staff of a weekly paper in Washington and writes the "On the Records" column for The New Republic.

DAVID DAICHES is a young English critic now teaching at the University of Chicago. His most recent books are "The Novel and the Modern World" and "Poetry and the Modern World."

DAVID W. PETEGORSKY is a member of the Department of Government at Antioch College and the author of "Left-Wing Democracy in the English Civil War," the English Left Book Club Choice for November, 1940.

ALISTAIR COOKE is the American correspondent for the British Broadcasting Corporation, special correspondent on American affairs for The London Times and also American correspondent for The London Daily Herald.

HARVEY BREIT has contributed to Poetry, Twice-a-Year and New Directions. The Capricorn Press will soon publish a book of his poems, "There Falls Tom Fool."

LINDSAY ROGERS is Burgess Professor of Public Law at Columbia University and has published several volumes on public law and administration.

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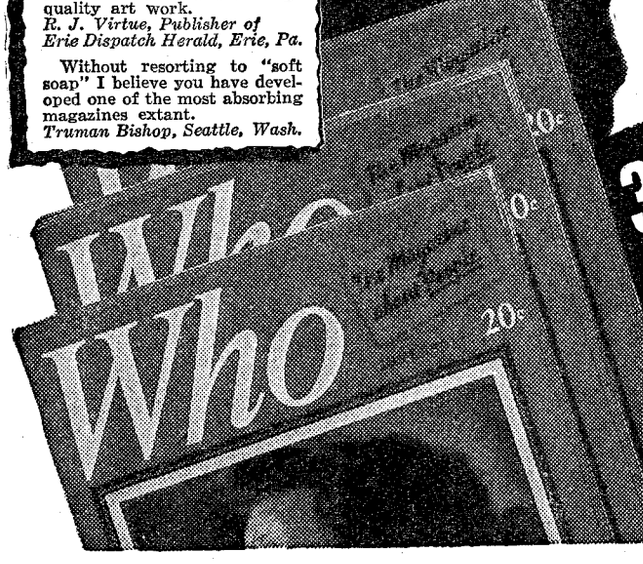

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